

ERICH KERN

Crimes against the German people

A documentation of allied atrocities

1964

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The conspiracy of silence
When will it finally be broken?

The protocols and affidavits were not changed stylistically or orthographically in order not to disturb the historical documentation. In the record of Allied atrocities, the disgraceful methods of the Allied victors' justice, their tortures and terror sentences, and the brutal treatment of German prisoners in the mass camps in the West and East were not included. This topic would claim a book of its own.

Foreword

With none of my documentary volumes did I have to overcome such difficulties in obtaining material as with this one. After the capitulation in 1945, the Allies with their censorship officers in East and West very carefully ransacked all archives and libraries and confiscated everything that could prove Allied war crimes. This time, too, the Soviets were vastly superior to their Western allies. For while here and there, despite everything, one comes across documents of Polish, French and British war crimes, the five volumes of the Foreign Office recording Soviet crimes against humanity in the Second World War have disappeared without a trace. The Western Allies were almost touchingly helpful to the Soviet censorship officers in destroying the evidence of Bolshevik crimes stored in the West. Nevertheless, after almost detective-like research, I managed to track down three of these volumes.

Almost hopeless is the attempt to prove the Allied war crimes with documentary photographic material. All picture archives were searched by the Allied censorship officers with unparalleled meticulousness, the phototechnical evidence confiscated, destroyed or taken out of the country. It is almost a miracle that some of the material was nevertheless recovered. The fact that the technical quality is not always perfect must be accepted.

The material I present in this volume of documentation is largely not new; it was just not taken note of. Perhaps one should say that these appalling facts could not be taken note of at all, since they were published, as it were, strangely enough, under exclusion of the public.

The volumes of the "Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa" (Documentation of the Expulsion of Germans from East-Central Europe), published between 1956 and 1961 by the Federal Ministry for Displaced Persons, Refugees and War-Affected Persons in Bonn, are out of print.

With the volume I/I (German Prisoners of War in Yugoslavia 1941 to 1949) of the Scientific Commission for German Prisoner of War History in Munich, a tragic-grotesque comedy has just been performed. The volume appeared already in 1962, but was not made available to the book trade for years and was carefully stored in the cellar.

When I asked the Scientific Commission in April 1964 for permission to inspect the volume, I received a reply on May 4, 1964 from its managing director, Mr. K. W. Böhme, who had also compiled the volume:

"... we cannot let you have parts of the material. This is federal property and we are not permitted to pass it on to third parties. In addition, we have made a commitment to the reporters to keep their reports confidential."

The Scientific Commission, which only has to sift through the prisoner-of-war experiences and prepare them ready for printing, is in fact completely bound by the instructions of the federal government.

My publisher, Waldemar Schütz, then spoke to the Foreign Office in Bonn without, however, reaching the volume he was looking for. A senior official of the press department, Dr. Falk, informed him that the Minister, Dr. Schröder, had personally reserved the right to make a decision in this matter, which was still pending at the moment. The press officer of the Ministry for Expellees, which was concerned with the production and publication of the book, refused to allow a copy of the book to be handed over from the Ministry's stocks.

What an effort to prevent the German people from learning what gruesome crimes - in this case committed by Yugoslavs - were perpetrated against helpless Germans!

What caution, lest an ally - even a communist one, as in this case - be exposed as a war criminal. The one-sided distorted image of war crimes would be shaken. In the end, there could even be something like a German outrage!

Meanwhile, some Austrian and Swiss papers picked up on these incredible measures and exposed the official cover-up attempt of German suffering by Bonn services. The consequence of these publications was an official inquiry in the German Bundestag. Thanks to this embarrassment, the German people are now allowed to read

these document volumes.

However, only God knows when the experiences of German prisoners of war from the Soviet Union, about which three volumes are planned, from Poland and Czechoslovakia, will be available for reading. What is certain is that the Scientific Commission, whose work is planned until 1968, will carefully organize the experiences and prepare the manuscripts ready for printing. Higher authorities will decide whether these manuscripts, i.e. the experiences of Germans in the hands of Allied war criminals, may be read.

However, the late retreat in the case of Yugoslavia will not change anything in everyday practice. None of the authoritative German newspapers - which have been tirelessly reporting on German real or alleged war crimes for twenty years - will inform their readers about it. After all, for twenty years they did everything they could not to exploit the material collected by the Landsmannschaften and the Soldatenbünde.

German radio and television, which now through two decades have non-stop painted the picture of the German war criminal in reports, features, discussions and radio plays, will not make the horrific Yugoslav or Soviet war crimes as much a reproach to their work as they have treated the crime of Allied area bombing of German inner cities or the rapes and murders by Western Allied troops.

People will continue to talk, film and write about Dachau, Buchenwald and Auschwitz until even the last Bushman and Eskimo absorbs the image of the German criminal, while at the same time keeping silent about Bromberg Bloody Sunday, the partisan mass murders and the gruesome German hunt in the East and Southeast.

People will continue to invoke the tragedy of Oradour and Lidice and discreetly pass over the funeral pyre of Dresden, over the boiling asphalt of Hamburg, over the Czech massacres in the Sudetenland and over the inferno suffered by Germans as prisoners in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

Our official morality is corrupt to the core. It has been profoundly degraded and prostituted by hypocrites and Pharisees.

That is why it will remain quiet about the German soldiers, hundreds of thousands of whom were tortured and buried somewhere; about the German women, millions of whom were degraded to the last, tens of thousands of whom were murdered; about the German children, who were murdered, violated and starved to death in the bomb shelters during the war and in the prison camps and icy refugee roads after the war.

They all must not live on even in thoughts. Who talks about them; it's all annoying at best!

This disturbs the whole conception, they say, when you protest. But it need not be disturbed at all. It is possible at any time to pass over the dead of yesterday to the agenda of tomorrow. But that is only possible if one is silent about all the dead, not only about the German ones, but also about the Jewish and allied ones. Everything else is no politics of the future, but only a cheap sleight of hand, an ineffectual attempt to win the future with the disgraced truth.

I have never had so many known and unknown helpers and collaborators with any book as with this one in particular. To all of them, who gave me hundreds of affidavits, messages and hints, my thanks.

I also have to thank some former army leaders and lawyers who supported me with advice and documents, and I especially have to thank those employees from departments and libraries who, without regard to "higher" hints and instructions, provided me with all those official volumes that were indispensable for such a documentation.

I did not write down these Allied atrocities, to which probably about eight million Germans fell victim - the whole number will never be statistically accurately recorded - in order to call for revenge and retribution. These cells do not want to open up new rifts between the peoples. But these facts must be published if the balance of the moral sense of justice, which has been shaken in the Germans by decades of agitation and lies, is to be restored. Never before have we needed the truth as much as we do today. In it alone lies our real future, which is why so many forces are at work to suppress the truth or to proclaim only half the truth.

words of the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset apply to this prevailing divided legal consciousness in Germany, in which everything is conceded to the Allies and nothing to the Germans: "Nothing in the present situation is so new and incomparable to any event the past as the rule which the intellectual plebs now exercise in public life."

I hope with a hot heart that this documentation of horrible truths will help to break the rule of the contemporary intellectual plebs.

The author

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A fairy tale is refuted There no such thing as a unilateral German war crime

Since the outbreak of World War II, the public of all countries has been and continues to be incessantly inundated with reports of alleged German crimes. In the past, this centrally controlled news offensive was part of the psychological warfare against the German nation. Long before the outbreak of war, the Communist chief propagandist Willi Münzenberg, who had emigrated from Germany, had already created a headquarters in Paris for false reports and inflammatory news against Germany. It was here that many of the legends and atrocity tales were invented - for example, that the German Reichstag was set on fire by German state or party officials - that are still alive today.

During the war, this dirty business was taken over by Denis Sefton Delmer, whose "black propaganda" against Germany was built on deception and distortion from the very beginning. In his astonishingly frank account of his life, "The Germans and I," which resembles a political striptease, Delmer admits this without batting an eye: "In the first few weeks after we put Gustav Siegfried One into operation, we had to invent all the stories with which the boss embellished his speeches. For some of these stories, we got the ideas and the material from a special rumor committee."

Later, from intercepted radio telegrams and the German newspapers freely available in neutral Sweden and Switzerland, the names and incidents that garnished Delmer's political fraud were extracted.

Some of Delmer's fairy tales are still alive: the letter that the crashed Colonel Werner Mölders is supposed to have written to the Catholic provost of Stettin, the fairy tale of the concentration camp imprisonment of the U-boat hero Günther Prien and the speech of the executed July 20 General Ludwig Beck. They live on, although their inventor Delmer himself openly admitted that everything was a hoax and a fraud.

The communist propaganda center of the Red Army "National Committee Free Germany" was established in Moscow, which eagerly participated in the agitation and political hoax.

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The main purpose of all this propaganda against Germany at the time was to cripple the German will to fight in order to facilitate the advance of the Allied armies.

After the war, this anti-German paralysis propaganda surprisingly did not end. Now it was necessary to make the material and human sacrifices plausible to the peoples, especially to the Americans, since in the meantime men like the U.S. General Albert C. Wedemeyer, the American historian Charles Callan Tansill spoke out and reported how President Franklin Delano Roosevelt extended the European war to a world war by all means - even by sacrificing Pearl Harbor. Such things could only be accepted and forgiven if it was a fight with the devil: So the German people had to be labeled a nation of diabolical criminals!

In Germany itself, in both the eastern and western occupation zones, the former aides of Denis Sefton Delmer and the National Committee Free Germany took over the now German-branded institutes of public information and opinion formation. They continued the anti-German agitation with all means, although the war was long over.

The mass of the German people had to be made submissive to the huge reparation payments and any emergence of a future national consciousness had to be nipped in the bud.

Besides this clearly recognizable objective, psychoanalytical fields feed the sources of the often already pathological anti-German agitation of German publicists, historians and politicians. The group of anti-German German agitation is already schizophrenic in its very nature. One part consists of people who left Germany voluntarily or forcedly before the war and stood in the fateful fight actively or passively on rare occasions of the Allies. This group of people is rejected purely emotionally by the majority of the population because they did not experience the severe hardship and, moreover, they are identified with the mistakes of the Allies. Thus, the members of this group of people fall into a dangerous inferiority complex, which forces them to constantly reaffirm that they and not the Germans were right in the past. But this group of people can seek and find such confirmation only in magnifying, exaggerating real or even inventing unreal German crimes.

The other group of people neither resisted nor emigrated. Most of them collaborated with the Third Reich. Today, therefore, they glorify the "inner emigration" in which they claim to have found themselves and strive to make up now for the resistance they missed during the war. But now that there is no more Hitler and no more National Socialism, these people automatically resist

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against the German people, who are always burdened anew with the past.

These severe neuroses, from which the described groups of people suffer, are cleverly used by all those states and interest groups who want two things in the rest of Germany:

- further reparation payments and reparation payments from the German taxpayer,
- To keep alive and increase guilt complexes in the German people, so that also in the future every German initiative would be eliminated.

Thus, the basic tendencies of the Allied psychological warfare against Germany continue to dominate all actions and the overall orientation of these centers and groups of people generating opinion in today's Germany.

Brought to the shortest denominator, it is incessantly repeated by them in various forms and, above all, drummed into the German people and the world public:

Germany is solely to blame for the war! Germany alone has committed war crimes.

Outside Germany there are a number of serious studies on the war guilt question, for example by the Englishmen Rüssel Grenfell, A. J. P. Taylor, the Americans Harry Elmer Barnes, David Leslie Hoggan, Frederic R. Sanborn, William Henry Chamberlin, William L. Neumann and the aforementioned Charles Callan Tansill, the Frenchmen Maurice Bardeche, Rene d'Argile, J. Ploncard d'Assac, Jacques Bearn, Henri Cocton, Pierre-Antoine Cousteau, Raymond Geouffre de la Pradelle, Henri Lebre and Michel de Meuny Here we must not forget the important works of Jacques Benoist-Mediiin, at the time certainly the greatest living European historian, passionate about the truth.

This revisionist historical research of foreign historians, while developing completely unchallenged in the USA, England and France, is negated or ridiculed within the German Federal Republic.

Well-known foreign authors, such as the American Freda Utley, the Englishman F. J. P. Veale, and the Frenchman Paul Rassinier, also soon turned against the one-sided war criminal blame and justice.

Although these historians and historical publicists labor with admirable zeal to refute the fairy tale of the sole German war guilt and the sole German war crimes, to dig out the truth from the jumble of half-truths, inventions, lies, and partly exaggerated facts, they receive no support from Germany. When Professor Paul Rassinier was commissioned by the American Hoover Founda-

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Even decades after the end of the terrible Second World War, a gruesome, bloody picture of German war crimes is repeated with stifling monotony on television, radio, in the magazines, newspapers, even in books, with an astonishing indefatigability. The tendency is unmistakable: only German war crimes and only German war criminals are spoken of. Nowhere can one see or hear anything about Allied war crimes, let alone read about them.

This account of one-sided German war crimes is reflected in the German war crimes justice system. In this, however, the victorious Allies did not rely on their wartime henchmen and companions.

To ensure that no one would get the idea of prosecuting Allied war criminals or their accomplices through the German judiciary after the declaration of sovereignty of the German Federal Republic, a "Treaty for the Settlement of Questions Arising out of War and Occupation", known for short as the "Oberleitungsvertrag", was

signed in Paris on October 23, 1954 and published in the Federal Law Gazette II, page 405 ff. on March 31, 1955.

Article 3 of this treaty, signed for the Federal Republic of Germany by Konrad Adenauer, for the USA by Dean Acheson, for France by Robert Schuman and for England by Anthony Eden, protects the accomplices of the Allies and has the following wording:

"No person shall, solely on the ground that he sympathized with the cause of the three Powers (United States, England, France), or supported them or their policies or interests, or furnished intelligence or services to the armed forces, authorities, or agencies of one or more of the three Powers, or to an agent of one of them, be indicted - or have his civil rights or economic position impaired by action of German courts or authorities. The same shall apply in favor of persons who have shown sympathy, given assistance, furnished intelligence, or rendered services to the allies of the three Powers in their joint endeavors prior to the entry into force of this Treaty. The German authorities shall use all means at their disposal to ensure that the purpose of this paragraph is achieved."

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Paragraph 2 of the article states that the German jurisdiction may not prosecute Allied war criminals. Paragraph 2 reads:

"Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (3) of this Article or by special agreement between the Federal Government and the Governments of the Three Powers or the Power concerned, German courts and authorities shall not have jurisdiction in criminal or non-criminal proceedings relating to an act or omission committed before the entry into force of this Treaty if, immediately before the entry into force of this Treaty, German courts and authorities did not have jurisdiction with respect to such acts or omissions, without regard to whether such jurisdiction arises on the merits or on the person."

The cited paragraph 3 then states when at all "German courts may exercise the jurisdiction to which they are entitled under German law". Of all the points listed here, paragraph (i i) b) is the most interesting. It reads:

"In criminal proceedings against natural persons, unless the investigation into the alleged offense had been finally completed by the law enforcement agencies of the power or powers concerned, or such offense was committed the performance of duties or performance of services for the occupying authorities"

On the basis of this transfer agreement, the prosecution of Western Allied war crimes committed against Germans is expressly forbidden to the German authorities. All courts to which Western Allied war criminals are reported shall discontinue investigations with reference to this transfer agreement.

What the Allies understood by "services" was made abundantly clear by the Americans in two cases that came to light:

The former Major Dr. Hans Kemritz of the German Abwehr betrayed supply fleets and vehicles for the German Afrika Korps to the Allies during the war. Thousands of Landsers, apart from crucial material, by the failure of which again thousands of Landsers lost their lives, went to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea.

After the war, Kemritz acted as a double agent for East and West in Berlin, playing Germans, some of whom lost their lives as a result, into the hands of the Soviets. When Kemritz was arrested by German authorities in Berlin in 1951, the Americans got him out of prison in a flash, and on the orders of the Americans, the investigation against Kemritz, which was underway at the Frankfurt (Main) District Court, had to be dropped without a sound.

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Proof number two was provided by the Czech mass murderer Frantisek Kroupa. He had murdered numerous Germans in St. Joachimsthal in 1945/46. Among other things, he publicly "executed" Germans who had been delivered to him defenselessly with his own hand - without a court verdict. When Sudeten German expellees recognized this tormentor and murderer of their compatriots, who had later fled to the West, in an IRO camp on West German soil and filed criminal charges against him, the Americans hurriedly took him out of the country to prevent prosecution. After the Transitional Agreement, however, the Allies no longer needed to make such

efforts: now war crimes committed against Germans were legally exempt from punishment! Individual Allied states, for their part, created exculpatory laws for their war criminals after the war and issued general amnesties for all crimes committed against Germans. Czechoslovakia unanimously passed the Amnesty Law through its Czech National Assembly. Section I of the Czechoslovak Amnesty Act of May 8, 1946, reads:

"Any offense committed in the period between September 30, 1938, and October 28, 1945, the purpose of which was to support the struggle for the freedom of the Czechs and Slovaks or which constitutes retaliation for actions of the occupiers and their helpers, is not unlawful, even if it would otherwise be punishable under the law."

Thus Czechoslovakia - at that time still a non-communist state - had the sad courage to declare by a law all the robberies, rapes and murders of the Germans basically unpunishable. The other Allies did not bother with that at all. They have long since come to terms with their past, both in the East and in the West, and therefore there is no collective shame for them, no coming to terms with the past, and certainly no prosecution of their own war crimes. All this exists only in the German states, regardless of whether they lie in the Western or Eastern sphere of influence. Since the millions of Germans, especially women and children, who burned and charred to death in the burning German cities as if on a gigantic funeral pyre, can no more be denied than the five million Germans who were murdered in 1945 and afterwards in the East and Southeast, or who perished because of the treatment meted out to them by the victors, a semi-official and now already official version has spread, which says: This terrible suffering that came upon the German people, with robbery, fire, rape, death-

-16- beating and murder, is only a consequence of the German misdeeds, and we are forced to take them upon ourselves as expiatory sacrifices! This argumentation is not only morally mendacious, but historically wrong: The murder of the Germans did not begin at the end of the war. Yes, it did not even begin during the war. Thousands and tens of thousands of Germans were slaughtered in the most bestial way at the outbreak of the war and even before the outbreak of the war, and entire families and villages were systematically exterminated. In those areas of West Prussia and Upper Silesia which fell to Poland after the First World War, the Germans were repeatedly the victims of Polish terror and murder in the years between the two world wars. Towards the end of the 1920s, the German ethnic group in Upper Silesia presented the Geneva League with a petition listing no fewer than 250 cases of the most severe Polish terror against the Germans. Especially after the emergence of the Third Reich, a strong wave of terror went through the German territories of Poland. From year to year the terror intensified, reaching unbearable proportions in the spring of 1939. There is a volume with reports of that time by the German Consuls General of Thorn, Poznan, Gdansk, Katowice, Lviv about this increasing terror on the German population. various cities where there was an increased German minority, regular German pogroms were organized May 1939 numerous Germans fell victim Threatening Germans with manslaughter and torture soon became a daily occurrence in all parts of Poland, as did the constant damage to or theft of German property. Family by family, Germans took refuge in the forests and fields, fearing nightly gang attacks on their homes. In many cases, the Polish police refused to accept reports. Often, they arrested the German complainants instead of prosecuting the Polish perpetrators of violence. In the Polish prisons and penitentiaries the Germans had to endure terrible torture. The ethnic German Schienemann, who was interrogated in Sieradz, had all his teeth knocked out. The prisoners Jäger, Grant, and the women Kiesewalter and Neudamm had burning liquids injected into their genitals to extort confessions, had their ribs broken, and were maltreated with electric current. Many Germans were murdered without their fate being known. The Poles acted with particular brutality against the Protestant Church and its sponsors. On March 2, 1939, they smashed the large window of the Christ Church in Posen. On March 12, about twenty young Poles pushed pastor Diestelkamp off his motorcycle in Wisseck and maltreated him.

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heavily. Around the same time, the window panes of the rectory in Schokken and the rectory in Kruschwitz were smashed. On April 15, Vicar Ortlieb was severely maltreated and kicked in the street in Neu-Barkoschien. On March 19, Pastor Schenk in Hallkirch was injured by stone throwing. On May 2, a children's church worker, Lenz, was attacked and severely maltreated near Schubin. On May 24, Poles again threw stones at Pastor Schenk, and the churches in Zirke, Briesen, Rakot, Rheinsberg, and the parsonages in Staykowo and Hohensalza were attacked and partially damaged. How the conditions in Poland were in reality before the war is shown in the

report of the German consul in Lodz to the Foreign Office in Berlin, which we want to publish here as one of the many official reports:

"Very serious outrages, which may be called German pogroms, occurred last Saturday, May 13, and Sunday, May 14, in the town of Tomashov-Mazowiecki (population about 42,000, of whom about 3,000 were Germans), during which numerous German livelihoods were completely destroyed. The German Schmiegel had his skull split, and a woman, whose name I have not yet been able to learn, was beaten to death in a field as she fled. The Schmiegel's son, who was thrown out of a second-story window of a house, lies down seriously injured. The riots began on Saturday, the 13th. A few days earlier, the "Union of Polish Professional Associations", which is close to the ruling party, had announced in large placards a demonstration against the Germans for Saturday, May 13. This began with speeches from the balcony of a building in which the aforementioned association, the ruling party Ozone, and its youth organization Mioda Polska (Young Poland) had their offices. In the speeches before a large crowd, the most vile incitements were made against Germany, claiming that the Poles were being treated very badly in the Reich, that their feet and hands were being broken, that their schools and churches were being destroyed, and the like. When the mob was sufficiently stirred up, the leaders of the demonstration handed over forms to various dubious elements who, accompanied by the crowd, were to demand from the factory managements the immediate dismissal of all Germans and the signing of the forms containing this declaration. This was then done. Under pressure from the street, the companies had to agree to this, and the German workers were then driven out of the factories. After this was accomplished, the crowd began to systematically demolish completely all German businesses and private residences. In a wild frenzy they destroyed pretty much all German private property. The

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Germans were hunted down like fair game, fleeing out into the countryside and returning only at daybreak. Many were considerably injured by knife wounds and blows from sticks. During Sunday, there was initially calm. In the evening, however, the riots began anew, and the crowd destroyed all German private property that had remained intact from the previous day. particularly noteworthy that the police marched with the demonstrators and did nothing to protect the lives and property of the Germans. It can be said without exaggeration that the riots took place with the connivance of the government, if not at its instigation. Now, after the acts of terror have been completed, police detachments patrol the streets of the city with side-rifles mounted, in order to keep up appearances. In Lodz on Saturday evening the windows of Ruppert's bookstore on Petrikauer Street, which sells German books and magazines, were smashed, as were the windows of the premises of the (completely apolitical) Professional Association of German Employees. Furthermore, yesterday, Sunday, riots took place in the cinema theater Stylowy, during the German movie "Land of Love", where terrorists forced the audience to leave the show and hit the fleeing people in front of the theater with slats in which nails were stuck. Since there is initially no reason to believe that the terrorist acts will cease, the situation is considered very serious by the local Germans. Increasingly, they are deciding to emigrate and sell their landed property, since they consider their existence in Poland to be in jeopardy. They fear the Poles, who, when all inhibitions are removed from them, do not shy away from any act of cruelty and are considered by the local German population to be much worse than the worst terrorists of the earlier Russian period.

from Berchem"

But all this was only a small prelude to the horrible tragedy that was soon to begin in Poland. But it was not only the Poles who began the war crimes. From the very first day of the Eastern campaign, the Soviet Russians were beating, shooting and hanging wounded and captured German soldiers of all ranks, often torturing them inhumanely beforehand. At that time there could be no question of a German war crime in the Soviet Union. French and British soldiers had already murdered German airmen who had made emergency landings in France and Belgium in 1940.

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From the very first moment, the partisans conducted their treacherous fight against the Landser in the Soviet Union, in Yugoslavia, in Greece, in France and in Italy only with murder and manslaughter from ambush.

The Allied area bombing of Germany according to Lindeman's criminal plan was a single war crime. Cynically, British Air Marshal Arthur Harris, chief of the Allied bomber fleets in World War II, confessed in his memoir, Bomber Offensive:

"It must be said emphatically that, with the exception of Essen, we never chose any particular industrial plant as a target. The destruction of industrial plants always seemed to us to be a kind of special bonus. Our real target was always the inner city."

Moreover, the bombing war against the civilian population had been impeccably started by the Allied and not the German air force.

Finally, the Americans - who had nothing at all to avenge, since not a meter of American soil had been threatened - moved into Germany in 1945 largely looting, raping and murdering. They and their Western allies, especially the French, differed from the Red Army only in the mass of crimes committed against the defenseless Germans, not at all in moral terms.

All this is covered up, hushed up, denied and even lied about.

If the great drama of the Allied war crimes is shown here on the basis of incontestable testimonies, the sole purpose is to provide documentary proof for the sake of moral and historical justice,

- that there were by no means only alleged and real German war crimes, but that the Allies in East and West were guilty of serious war crimes against Germans on a continuous basis;
- that in both Poland and the Soviet Union the Allies were the first to commit war crimes, exclusively against Germans;
- that the Western Allies also soiled themselves with numerous war crimes against Germans.

This should finally disprove the mendacious fairy tale that war crimes were committed from the German side alone.

Of course, this does not mean that there were no war crimes committed by the Germans. In all wars, at all times, war crimes were committed by all belligerents. In the Second World War, all belligerents violated the laws of humanity, including the Germans. By no means, however, as it is hypocritically tried to make out today, only the Germans.

Therefore, if someone actually acts according to moral and legal principles, he or she is

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If a judge wants to historically or legally investigate, evaluate and judge the crimes against humanity committed during the war, he must accuse all of them: the Poles, the Soviet Russians, the Czechs, the Yugoslavs, the Italians, the English, the French, the Americans and the Germans.

This, however, does not happen!

The legal father of this one-sided theory of German war guilt and German war crimes is the Hessian Prosecutor General Dr. Fritz Bauer, whose book "Krigs - Förbrytarna inför domstol" ("The War Criminal on Trial"), published in Stockholm in 1944, mentally prepared the disastrous path that was also taken by Germany after 1945.

In his account, Bauer, then an émigré in Stockholm, only knows how to report on German guilt and German crimes; he takes no notice of the serious Polish, Soviet and Yugoslav war crimes, nor of the criminal Anglo-American area bombing of German residential areas.

In his diction, Dr. Fritz Bauer even goes far beyond the later verdict of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg in 1944 when he writes:

"The German people are responsible for actions of their government. Germany's guilt in the present war arises, legally, from its breach of the Kellogg Pact and other non-aggression pacts entered into by

Germany. Legally, the German people bear responsibility for the consequences."

A view that is thankfully not shared by authoritative European jurists.

In response to my question about the legality of war crimes justice, the famous French defense lawyer Maitre replied to me in Paris in 1964

J. Isorni:

"The concept of war crime was coined by the victor against the vanquished and practiced by victor's justice. The unilateral prosecution of war crimes has nothing to do with the real legal concept of law. It is merely a political action that puts a legal cloak around itself."

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- Beat all Germans to death! -The Poles started with the war criminal!

The Allied mass murder of defenseless Germans began in Poland. From the moment German troops crossed the Polish borders, the German minority in Poland and the Reich Germans living there were outlawed. In all towns and villages the gruesome hunt for the Germans began; the Polish police and army authorities stood idly by and watched these horrible goings-on. In many cases, Polish uniformed officers even participated in the crimes. Especially the German settlements of the Posener Land, the German farming villages of the Vistula lowlands as well as Bydgoszcz-City and Bydgoszcz-Land with their strong German population were hit hard. The severe persecutions of Germans took place mainly in the period from August 31 to September 6, 1939, and reached their gruesome climax in Bydgoszcz on Bloody Sunday, September 3, 1939. It was only around September 17/18 that the last deportees were liberated by the German troops near Lobitsch.

Germans were slain and shot individually, in groups, and en masse. For days the dead still lay in front of their houses, in the yards and gardens, mostly unburied, sometimes covered with twigs or leaves or superficially buried. Their corpses showed mutilations not to be described, which can be published only in the following testimonies. Usually they lay in twos or threes tied together with rope on the side of the road, on a field or on the shore of bodies of water. Many of the victims were found weeks later in remote places.

According to the official German findings at the time, 58,000 dead or untraceably missing were registered by February 1, 1940. Some of the dead were in such a condition that only 12,857 murdered persons could be identified with certainty by that time.

The following statements were made by German field courts and before officials of the Reich Criminal Police Office and published in 1940 by order of the Foreign Office. They provide more to illuminate the war crimes problem than the imagination and creative power of any writer could ever present.

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"On Bloody Sunday, September 3, 1939, at 10:30 a.m. I was knocked out of our air-raid shelter in my factory with my 13- and 15-year-old sons by four young bandits armed with axes. We were immediately met in the courtyard by two soldiers with bayonets and had to run to the main guard with our hands raised. On the way the people hooted, women and girls were like furies. They spat at us and beat us, but the soldiers did not stop them. In the main guardhouse we had to pass through an alley about 8 meters long under piston blows. With our hands raised, we stood against a wall for about an hour after our bags had been searched. Now a squad of about 100 people, mostly well-known citizens of the city, was pushed into the street, and under cover we always had to walk with our hands raised through Danziger, Elisabethstraße to the barracks at the train station. On the way the beasts threatened with sabers, daggers, axes, they spat and beat - the poor boys could almost not go on. There were several more among them. A podium had been erected in the riding stable. "Command up" - we were the first. More and more came - many fathers with their sons, at last, when it became dark, we were about 400. All were composed, silent, but with courage in their eyes.

A sudden paralysis occurred only when an intelligent man of about 20 years of age moved six steps away from us. He was pushed back with the bayonet, shouted "Heil Hit....", there was a bang, and he lay on the ground, hit in the body. His legs, which he was still moving, were strapped tightly to a stretcher, and he was carried out, shouting savage insults. "Report who has military papers with him," they suddenly said. The papers were taken away - you can pick them up tomorrow at the commissariat. Some of us were taken out to load ammunition - those were the lucky few, because most of them are alive today. The rest of us were gathered and marched out along the Kujawy road to Brzoza. Already on the way the old men, who were out of breath, were stabbed with bayonets and some were murdered. Shortly after the town "Halt" was ordered; we had to give a "Hail" to Poland and were told to go home. The squad only got as far as No. 40 to 60 Kujawier Street, where we were slammed from the front and back. Many were now bestially murdered. Rounded up, we were now only about 150 and were dragged on by a streetcar column.

I covered my boys and received a bayonet thrust in the right thigh. Whoever could not run and sat down was knocked down with the butt, because after about two hours the first lieutenant forbade shooting down because it was banging. Behind milepost 10, we had to turn left 3 kilometers into the woods and were put in a low, miserable open

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It was 5 o'clock on Monday morning. To everyone's horror we were only 44; terrible thirst and hunger tormented us all. My son Heinz was interrogated anew every hour five steps in front of us as to whether I or others had shot at Polish military. He defended us all very skillfully in Polish under my instruction, which I whispered to him at times because he was allowed to visit us, and by his attractive nature he finally managed to soften up the brutal soldateska. We were all shocked when Heinz whispered to us that they were sending for gasoline and wanted to burn us, but the children were allowed to go home. But they did not find any gasoline. We had to come out suddenly and were given coffee and a piece of zwieback. Everyone hoped that we would live, but Döring, the lathe operator, whispered in my ear: "This is the last meal. He was right; at 7:30 soldiers came running wildly screaming. "Always three out," they said.

Silently the first three went, it banged, they had died for our fatherland. Six times the same. Heinz went bravely to the hole and asked to be spared with brother Horst, he received a bayonet thrust through the right shoulder. "Again three out" - I counted the steps, it was ten to twelve, then they were murdered. Now Heinz informed us, the corporal says the bullets are too bad, you should stab the rest. "Ääh - my God" was now only to be heard. Whoever was not silent then received the dull deadly butt blows. It was now the turn of the three of us; there were still five behind us who did not want to get out and clawed their way out. We now went out, hand in hand, but were pushed aside on the left. Two soldiers, corporals, grabbed us and pushed us a few steps away; they were the two robbers whom Heinz had cleverly told the day before that we were carrying great valuables and a lot of money. We gave them everything we had, and an argument began between them about the division. We took advantage of this moment and ran away. The night was always before Polish machine guns, there was no sleep to be found. There was no end to the wandering, it was Monday night. Heinz was bandaged with a piece from my shirt. We were only in shirts, and our half-shoes had been kicked off during the run in Bromberg. To Wednesday night it became bad - we saw beside us a lot of military, ran on two battery positions, dodged again and again. "Would we rather die," Horst said. Tongues were thick and all white, lips thick and crusted. A salvation came: strong dew lay on the low coniferous trees, we licked it greedily and consumed a frog with it. "More delicious than wine," said Heinz, and we had Horst, who had finished with life, on his feet again. Thursday night was quite dry; now came the deathly hunger as well. I still have a piece of bread," said Heinz suddenly, "but we'll eat it first.

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five minutes before death - but then we live a few more hours." It happened like that. Thursday morning we kept bumping into military. We could not see it because of weakness. At 2 o'clock we were sure to see our German soldiers ahead of us and ran into a captain. Coffee and some cognac revived us, and splendid pea soup with bacon restored the old vitality. Two hours later we entered the redeemed Bydgoszcz with a wonderful feeling

and were soon in the arms of my wife and our Mutti, who always could not believe that there was such a miracle of reunion.

Bydgoszcz, September 12, 1939

signed Herbert Matthes, furniture manufacturer".

Under oath, the witness Giese from Bromberg testified as follows:

"My name is Johanna Giese, née Keusch, I am 51 years old, Protestant, ethnic German, residing in Bromberg, Konopnickiej 9.

On Sunday, September 3, 1939, between 11 and 12 o'clock we were in the cellar of our apartment. Polish soldiers and civilians came to our property. They demanded that we come out of the cellar. When we came out of the cellar, a soldier claimed that there was shooting from our house. We had no weapons in the house at all.

My son-in-law left the cellar first. At that moment a civilian shouted, "The Szwaby must all be shot!" My son-in-law was immediately shot by a soldier. They shot him through the artery; he also had three other shots in his chest and neck. Nevertheless, he was not killed immediately, but was still alive on Sunday evening when we had to flee. We could not take him with us and laid him on a chaise longue in the apartment.

When the German military marched into Bydgoszcz on Tuesday, I took a sergeant with me to my homestead because I wanted to see what it looked like there. I was confronted with a terrible sight. They had taken my son-in-law down from the chaise longue. They had dragged him into the kitchen, right under the kitchen table.

... [The gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced].

My son Reinhard Giese had also been down in the cellar with us. My son was 19 years old. When he saw that my son-in-law had been shot, he tried to escape. He also managed to escape over the fence of the neighboring property. They ran after him, caught him and shot him. I took my son's body to the laundry room that evening. He had been shot in the chest.

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Another son of mine, Friedrich Giese, 25 years old, is said to have been shot in Hopfengarten together with the whole family to whom he had taken refuge."

Under oath, the witness Paul Sikorski testified as follows:

"My name is Paul Sikorski, I am 35 years old, Catholic, merchant, I describe myself as a Volksdeutscher, resident in Bromberg, Mühlenstraße 4.

On Sunday, September 3, 1939, early around 6 o'clock I went to the mill to switch off the light and turn off the turbine. On the way there I suddenly heard loud shouting from the railroad embankment. At a distance of about 100 meters I saw how below the railroad embankment a group of railwaymen and civilians and military were beating seven persons aged 20 to 60 with bayonets, rifle butts, clubs. They had surrounded the victims. I walked a little closer and heard them shouting in Polish, "Kill the Germans!" I could see the blood splattering from a distance. But then I turned around when I saw that the horde was about to pounce on me as well. At 9 o'clock I went back and looked at the corpses. The eyes of two corpses had been twisted out with bayonets. The eye sockets were empty, there was only a bloody mass left. In three, the skulls were covered, the brains were lying a meter away from the corpses. The other corpses were also totally smashed. In one corpse the whole body was slashed to the top. I knew two of these murdered people. They were the butcher Lechnitz from Jägerhof and Mr. Schlicht.

In the afternoon at 3 or 4 o'clock a group of soldiers with railroad men came and brought 18 Germans to my mill, the Peterson mill. They were tied together in twos. I could watch this closely from the garden. They were then shot down in twos all 18 of them. Then they hit those who were lying on the ground. Among them was a fourteen-year-old boy and a woman. This time it obviously had to happen very quickly, because they all disappeared again immediately. I took a close look at the corpses afterwards; they lay there for another three days.

On Monday afternoon, when it was already said that the Polish military had left, two soldiers brought an elderly man and an elderly woman. They lined them up against the wall in front of me in the mill. I ran there, knelt down in front of the soldiers and asked them in Polish to let the two old men go. They were both about 65 years old. But I got a butt blow from one of the soldiers. At the same time he said to me: "Let the damned Niemcys (Germans) die!" Before I could get up, they had already shot down the two old people so that they rolled into the ditch. Then the soldiers moved off at a steady run."

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Under oath, the witness Christa Gollnick, Bromberg, Kujawierstraße 101, testified as follows:

"We had a grocery store at the same time for flour and fodder. When the first Polish troops were leaving, I saw our Polish neighbor approaching a Polish major, telling him something and pointing to our house. Polish soldiers then rushed into the store after breaking down the door. We thought that there was a battle going on and that the soldiers were trying to hide in our house. We then ran to our dugout, which we had built by order. We did not get there, however, because the Polish soldiers shot at us. My husband was hit in the shoulder and received a piston blow to the face. My husband staggered, but still wanted to escape. He tried to climb over a fence, but was held down by a civilian. He received another butt blow from a Polish soldier, so that he remained lying on the ground.

A Polish lieutenant brought my children and me back to the house. From a garret I saw my husband lying there. He was still alive for a long time. I saw him pull his legs to his body and push them away again, raising his hand now and then. However, it was not possible for us to go to him because there were Polish soldiers and civilians standing all around. A Polish policeman was constantly standing by the fence where my husband lay. Polish women were shouting, "The pig is still alive!" Towards evening, my husband received from Polish

Soldiers three more shots, after he had been stabbed in the body with a bayonet earlier in the afternoon. I observed how my husband always grabbed this spot with his hands and tried to open his pants. It was open afterwards. My neighbor told me that my husband was still gasping the next day. My husband was tall and strong and only 38 years old, so he will have died so badly. He lay for about 18 hours before death delivered him."

The 48-year-old widow Käthe Finger from Bromberg testified on September 15, 1939:

"On Bloody Sunday, several Volksdeutsche and a Polish woman, whom we had ordered for our protection, were in our apartment. My husband would now be 62 years old. In the morning about 11 o'clock the mob came through our street. In the crowd were the Weyna brothers, who lived across the street from us in the Raddatz house, and the defendant Owczaczak. One of the Weyna brothers was armed.

After a while I heard from the next room how my husband said to our house daughter Goede that Owczaczak was pointing at our apartment. Immediately afterwards he came to me and said, "For God's sake, the mob is coming to our apartment. Now we must die." He still explained to me that we had to-

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wanted to die together. Immediately afterwards, the mob, including a soldier, entered our apartment. The soldier demanded that my husband and I lie down on the carpet. We did so. Then he fired. My husband was killed immediately. When the second shot at me was not fired as I expected, I straightened up a bit and noticed that my hands were red from my husband's blood. I was now pushed up by the soldier when I said "my God". Then I was pushed out the door and taken away with the other people who had sought shelter in our apartment. On the way we were insulted by the crowd accompanying us; beaten and trampled underfoot. When we passed the locks, a Polish civilian tried to drag me to the canal with the words "Psia krew Hitlerowa". However, I managed to tear myself away. I was then taken to the police station, where I was met with such a violent kick that I flew against a wooden fence. We who were arrested were then forced to lie down for a long time in the courtyard of the police station. We were shouted, "Lie here like cattle, you German bloodhounds!" New victims kept arriving, beaten bloody and moaning in pain. I would like to mention that my 12-year-old boy was lying next to me. Shots were

constantly fired from the neighboring houses and from the direction of the locks into the courtyard of the police station, and Germans were also hit. They were then taken away. Whether they were dead, I do not know. After about 7 hours I was released by the intervention of a Polish police officer with my 12-year-old son."

This is how the families were exterminated

When shots were fired on Bloody Sunday in Bromberg near the property of the Beyer gardening family, the Beyer family, the couple and their two sons, aged 11 and 18, and the 22-year-old gardener's assistant Erich Thiede tried to flee to the nearby apartment of the 66-year-old Beyers' mother.

But a troop of Polish railwaymen got in the way of the fugitives and drove the Beyer family, including the old woman, back to the gardener's property. The Poles searched for "weapons" but could not find any, as none were available. Finally they drove away father Beyer and his two sons as well as the helper Thiede. When the mother clutched her 11-year-old son Kurt, they pushed the woman back and snatched the child from her.

On the following Monday at about 9 o'clock, the Pole Stefan Sitarek found the bodies of Friedrich Beyer, -29- his son Heinz, and the assistant Thiede lying next to and on top of each other north of the railroad. Among them lay the 11-year-old child, who was obviously badly injured and moaning. Sitarek tried to take care of the seriously injured boy, but the Polish doctors refused to help. Then, in the morning hours of September 4, the child also succumbed to his injuries.

The 11-year-old Kurt Beyer, who was later examined, had two chest shots running from front to back, a shattering of the right forearm bone and a slash wound above the left eye.

On September 3, 1939, in the early afternoon, Polish soldiers in uniform appeared on the farm of the farmer Artur Radler in Bromberg, Wladysiawa Belzy 55, held a "house search" and then took the 19-year-old son Fritz Radler with them. A short time later Fritz Radler was shot.

The surviving 14-year-old daughter Dorothea Radler described the extermination of her family as follows:

"On Sunday, September 3, 1939, at about 4:30 p.m., about six Polish soldiers came to our house. They made a house search for weapons. After the search, which was fruitless, they took my older brother Fritz, 18 years old, with them. They led him behind a fence about 200 meters from our house. A neighbor, who is also already dead, told my father, Artur Radler, shortly afterwards that they had shot my brother. More Germans had already been shot. The gas commander told us that the Polish military would take away all the dead. We therefore left my brother lying there until Monday evening. Then we had to bury him at the request of the soldiers. My father told us that his brother had been shot in the chest.

On Monday, September 4, Polish soldiers came out of the forest again, and this time a lot of them, a whole detachment. They wanted to drink. My 16-year-old brother was in the yard. Civilians had also come with the soldiers. They said to the soldiers that yesterday their brother had been shot. The Polish soldiers now said to the younger brother that his older brother had shot at them. When my brother replied that he had not shot, they hit him on the head and shoulders with the butt of their rifle and with their fists. Frightened, my brother ran away and tried to hide in the raspberry bushes. There they found him and shot him. He received two shots, one hit him in the head.

Fifteen minutes later, my father came into the house and told us that the soldiers had just put a grenade into the house. Immediately after that, soldiers came to the yard again, and my father went out to them. The soldiers immediately shot at my father. They hit him in the neck. The bullet entered the back of the

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Shoulder blade out again, in fact there was an exceedingly large hole in the back. My father was not dead yet, he had been alive for 5 hours. They forbade us to give him a drink or help him in any other way. My father begged the soldiers for mercy. They laughed at him, saying, "You can die." The crowd laughed and jeered. Finally, after five hours, a soldier took pity and gave my father the mercy shot in the temple. The bullet was again very large; ... [The gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced.] During the night from Monday to Tuesday we still stayed at home in our apartment. The next day many Polish guns were brought up near our house. Fearing

that something might happen to us, we went to our neighbor Johann Held. This witness is still alive. We wanted to go to the cellar there. The Polish tenant of the witness Held, who is therefore in the property, did not allow us to do so. The tenant's name is Gorski."

Under oath, the witness Friedrich Weiß, master butcher in Wonorze, testified as follows:

"In total 25 men from Wonorze have been shot. They had been buried by the Polish military after they had been robbed of most of their clothing. After eight to ten days I dug up the corpses and found that they all had bullet wounds, and in some cases the skulls were also injured, in such a way that half the skull was cracked open. Whether this was due to the shots or other treatment, I cannot say."

Under oath, the witness Heinrich Krüger, farmer in Tannhofen, testified as follows:

"Since there had been frequent inquiries about my son and since individual villagers had already been shot by the Polish military, my son Ernst fled with Albert Zittlau and the brothers Willi and Heinz Schäfer, who had initially been hiding in the barn, on Tuesday, September 5, 1939. On September 19, 1939, I learned from Mrs. Zittlau that she had found her husband buried in the field near the Rucewko domain, close to the road. She told me that only the head and one arm were sticking out of the ground. In addition, the cap of Willi Schäfer had been found near the burial site. Since we all suspected that all four fugitives might now be lying together, I went with some Germans from our village to the place where they had been found

With the help of others brought in, we dug up the burial site and uncovered my son, the Zittlau and the Schäfer brothers. The corpses were lying in a jumble. Under the bodies the soil was bloody. I assume that these four were killed directly in this pit. As they fell, they will also have been buried.

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With my son -was the abdominal area exposed from the clothes, skirt and vest were pushed away to both sides and the shirt too. . . . [His boots had been removed and were missing. Furthermore, his wallet with about 40 zloty, watch with chain and other papers were taken away. At any rate, he had these things when he left his parents' house.

Heinz Schäfer's belly was also slit open, [The sight of Heinz Schäfer and my son were the same, only Heinz Schäfer's genitals were missing. ... same observation made by the farmer Heinrich Wising from Tannhofen, who was present. We both still talked about it. We looked for bullet wounds in both my son and Heinz Schäfer, but found none.

The other two had their clothes on. Zittlau was shot in the chest. In the case of Willi Schäfer we could not find any injuries at all. We did not undress the bodies. With Zittlau, we only opened the clothes in the front."

The witness Anton Dombek, garden inspector in Bydgoszcz, Goethestr. 2 c., testified under oath:

"On Tuesday, September 5, 1939, the Polish citizen militia, mixed with soldiers, left. About half an hour later the German troops entered the town. We started cleaning up the cityscape early on Wednesday morning. The sight that met our eyes was terrible. The elderly had been shot without any significant mutilation. In contrast, we found 8 corpses mutilated beyond recognition in a mass grave at Bülowplatz. The corpses were covered with straw and sand was thrown over them. Some of the dead had the back of their heads completely cut off, their eyes gouged out, their arms and legs broken, even their individual fingers.

Whole families were murdered, e.g. Kohn, father, mother and three children; Boddin, 3 persons; Bölitze, father, 2 sons; Beyer, father, and 2 sons (18 and 10 years old), the youngest was snatched from the hand of the weeping mother."

The witness Else Siebert, née Dey, from Rojewo, Hohensalza District, testified under oath as follows: "On September 7, 1939, we observed Polish military on the Chaussee marching in the direction of Hohensalza. From a troop that stopped on the road, soldiers came to our house and asked us if we wanted to wait for Hitler, and

demanded that we leave immediately.

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were to drive. We hurriedly packed the most necessary things onto a wagon and then used a wagon together with the Trittel family, since we each had only one horse. My brother-in-law, who was also riding with us, had harnessed his wagon with his two horses. We drove via Hohensalza - Rojewo to an estate located nearby. We stopped there, but were then betrayed by a Hallas family from Liskowo to the Poles present on the estate, some of whom were wearing armbands. These Poles asked my husband to come along, they led him to the end of the estate and shot him there. I did not see the shooting myself, but I heard the shot and later saw my husband lying there. Shortly after that, the armband people came for my brother-in-law, whom they also took to the end of the estate and shot by two shots. Shortly after my husband was taken away, I had also gone to the spot in question with my three daughters and still saw my husband fall down. The people with the armbands then fetched the neighbor Trittel, whom they also shot, despite his repeated pleas for mercy. After that the daughter Tritteis was shot, also from the front, some time later the son Tritteis, who got the shot from behind and fell on the corpse of his sister. All the shootings were carried out by one and the same man, and he shot with a carbine. I assume that he came from the estate in question and that he played the same role there as the people with the same armbands do here on our estates. After the shooting of these five people, I was to be shot along with my three daughters. We were forced to lie down on the ground, on our faces, and then the man pointed the carbine at us. I did not see the latter myself, I know it from my daughter, who repeatedly turned around. The people of the estate stood around us and kept shouting that we had to be shot. The man with the armband did not shoot us after all, but after we had been lying there for about two hours, he let us go into a storehouse, where he locked us in.

I would also like to note that when Mr. Trittel did not want to go to the place where he was later shot, he was beaten in the worst possible way with whips and clubs by civilians."

The mass murders in Jägerndorf, Eichdorf and Schrimm.

On September 3, military search parties repeatedly appeared at the Lutheran parsonage in Jägerndorf under the pretext that the pastor Richard Kutzer had hidden weapons. Of course, this was not the case. Despite-

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At 1:30 p.m., the pastor was arrested and taken away. At about 3 p.m. the Poles reappeared and led away the 73-year-old father of the pastor, Otto Kutzer, the 14-year-old Herbert Schollenberg, the 17-year-old Hans Nilbitz and three other fugitives present in the parsonage.

They were led to a railroad embankment passing not far from the church grounds, where 12 other men and a woman, the Köbke wife, were already waiting. What happened next is described by the surviving widow Anna Köbke as follows:

"When we, i.e. my husband, my daughter, my son and I, heard on Sunday, September 3, in the morning that all the Germans were to be slain, we went to the cellar of our neighbor Schröder, who was a friend of ours, for our safety and locked ourselves in there. At about 12 o'clock a large crowd of soldiers and civilians came and banged on the cellar door, also threw hand grenades and shot into the cellar windows. My daughter was wounded in the hip by a shot. I was the first to escape from the cellar and ran into our garden. When I came out of the cellar, in my fear I did not recognize anyone among the large crowd of people. Only our neighbor, bricklayer Klimczak, I recognized, because he tried to hold me and exclaimed that I was a German and should be beaten to death. I managed to escape Klimczak's hands and get into my garden.

After about a quarter of an hour I went to the Polish family Gorny (shoemaker) who lived near us. I hoped that I might find shelter there. The Gorny couple and other persons present there, unknown to me, insulted and spat at me. Then soldiers appeared and took me away to a forest where there were already about 20 Volksdeutsche. I was tied up there. Then we were herded back and forth, pushed with rifle butts, kicked, and were to be shot in Schleusenau. On the way to Schleusenau we were pursued by a large crowd of Polish civilians, namely women, children and men, who continued to curse at us, demand our death and beat us with axes and clubs. Among this crowd was also the butcher Gniewkowski, known to me, and a certain Paschke from Schleusenau. I heard clearly

that these two repeatedly shouted along with the crowd that we Germans should be beaten to death or shot. Whether Gniewkowski or Paschke carried an axe or a club in their hands, I do not know. We ethnic Germans - there were about 20 of us and I was the only woman - were then placed on a railroad embankment in Schleusenau. All of the ethnic German men were shot by the soldiers and railroad workers in presence of the Polish crowd, which included Gniewkowski and Paschke

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I fainted and fell to the ground and was then released by order of an officer. As I was about to leave, the Polish crowd forced me to go back and look at the corpses and shout "cheers" for Poland. Among the 20 or so people shot were: Artur Gehrke from Jägerhof, Hans Bolowski from Jägerhof, Horst Stuwe from Jägerhof, a certain Goertz from Jägerhof, a certain Arndt from Jägerhof, a certain Stöckmann from Jägerhof, a certain Redel from Jägerhof, a high school student Mielwitz from Jägerhof, a house owner Trojahn from Jägerhof. Of the persons who remained in the cellar of the Schröder - as I learned later - the following persons were shot while escaping from the cellar:

My husband Emil Koebke, master butcher; my son Arthur Koebke, journeyman butcher; gardener Schröder; his son Hans Schröder; Gerhard Vorkert, gardener's assistant; a maid of young Schröder.

gez. Anna Koebke, née Wietychowski"

Under oath, the witness Dora Kutzer in Bromberg, Kronerstr. 14, testified as follows:

"As far as I know, there is hardly a house in our Protestant community where one, two or even three ethnic Germans have not been murdered. In our Lutheran cemetery there are 59 so far, and not all of the dead have been found."

Under oath, the witness Walli Hammermeister, maid for Erich Jahnke in Langenau near Bromberg, testified as follows:

" ... when the soldiers noticed that Mr. Fritz could not speak Polish, a soldier held it against him that he himself as a young person could speak German and Polish. It would now be 20 years of Poland, and he could not yet speak Polish. Mr. Fritz explained that he was 75 years old and that he could not have learned Polish at that age. In response, another Polish soldier said, "Put a bullet in his head!" The first soldier now shot Mr. Fritz a bullet right into his head. This happened before my eyes. I fled into the straw barn."

On September 4, 1939, 39 Germans were murdered by Polish soldiers at Lake Jesuit, 21 kilometers south of Bromberg. Since Gustav Gruhl from Bromberg and Leo Reinhard from Zielonke escaped death by a lucky coincidence, this mass crime became known. The captured Germans were driven along the road to Hohensalza in such a way that the left wrist of one was tied to the right wrist of the other.

When the column reached Lake Jesuit, 41 prisoners were lined up a few meters from the edge of the lake, facing the water.

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Thereupon the Polish soldiers, standing only a few meters away from their victims, began to fire indiscriminately. In the middle of the massacre, a German reconnaissance plane appeared over the lake area. The Polish murderers took cover, so that those who still survived began to flee. But only a few succeeded. The others were dragged, some dead, some seriously injured, over a footbridge built 60 meters into the lake and from here thrown into the water.

39 bodies were later recovered, and the identity of 28 of them was established. Most of the victims looked horrible. Some of them had up to 15 bullet holes.

In the village of Eichdorf, which is located in front of the smaller municipality of Netzheim, there was also a

horrible German slaughter in the late evening hours of September 4 until the evening of September 5. When Polish military moved in during the late evening hours of September 4, the dehumanized Polish soldiers began slaughtering the German population for no reason at all. When the Poles finally withdrew, 38 corpses remained. Among those murdered were: Max Teske, Wilhelm Stolte, 13-year-old Gerhard Pijan, 12-year-old Else, 15-year-old Gertrud and 18-year-old Ernst Janot with her father. The 80-year-old Ottilie Renz, the 4-year-old Gisela and the 9-year-old Günter Renz were slaughtered along with 15 unidentified Germans, including eight women and two three- and seven-year-old children.

Later, in the woods near Targowisko, about 300 meters from the road near Eichdorf, the bodies of 46 ethnic Germans, ranging in age from six months to 80 years, were found. Only the following could be identified: Emma Hanke, 40 years; Walter Busse, 7 years, Erhard Prochnau, 3 years; Johanna Schwarz, 45 years; Max Jeschke, 55 years; Hedwig Jeschke, 47 years; Eise Dahms, 19 years; Kurt Kempf, 22 years; Gustav Schubert, 65 years; Richard Binder, 50 years; Emanuel Hemmerling, 35 years; Erna Hemmerling, 30 years; Frieda Ristau, 31 years; Mrs. Blum, 28 years; Mrs. Golz, 50 years.

Not far from there, the Tetzlaff family was murdered: Martha Tetzlaff (45), Heidelies Tetzlaff (11), Eise Behnke (35), Gustav Behnke (82).

Under oath, the witness Adolf Erti, merchant in Czempin, district of Kosten, testified as follows:

" ... Nine of these comrades were attacked by the population in Schrimm and maltreated to death in the open street. My comrade Willi Mantei had the entire back of his head crushed. Herbert Raabe had his eyes gouged out and his fingers cut off. Others also had their fingers cut off, and some of their legs and hands were broken and dislocated. Others again had their faces cut out by

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The men were beaten to death, their tongues cut out, and their noses and ears cut off. Under oath, the witness Oskar Hartmann, brickmaker in Schrimm, testified as follows:

" ... In one grave there was a person who could not be determined. In addition, the bodies of the following persons were found in the Lutheran cemetery in Schrimm: Conrad Lange, Wilhelm Schulz, Heinrich Häußler, Wilhelm John, Erich Gaumer, Richard Weibt, Wilhelm Jeschke. All the corpses were more or less mutilated. The heads were ... [the gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced]."

Under oath, the witness Gertrud Lemke from Hohensalza testified as follows:

"On Wednesday, September 6, 1939, at about 11:30 a.m., a member of the Polish Army in uniform with a carbine and 8 to 10 civilians with clubs appeared in our apartment. The soldier asked my husband to come with us immediately. Since my husband had forgotten his ID card, I ran after him a few minutes later, but I only saw him turn the next corner together with my father, accompanied by the soldiers and the civilians.

On Sunday, September 10, 1939 - I had not heard anything about the whereabouts of my father, my husband and my uncle for so long - my father-in-law came to me and told me that eight corpses, some of them burned, had been found near our knacker's yard. The corpses had been lying on the ground. I now urgently asked him to go there himself and find out whether our relatives were there. When my husband and father were taken away, I already had the premonition that I would not see either of them again, since there had already been a great deal of German agitation in Hohensalza for some time.

A short time later my father-in-law came back and confirmed my premonition. From our family lay between two stacks of straw: my husband, my father, my uncle, three men from the Fuchs family and an assistant of Mr. Fuchs. The eighth body was unknown..."

Under oath, the witness Maria Richert, née Richert, farmer's widow in Rybno, testified as follows:

" ... On Tuesday, September 12, 1939, or Wednesday, September 13, 1939, we found my son and the farmers

Gatzke, Dreger and Tober buried in a hole in a small wood near Koneck. One of my son's eyes had been gouged out, his back had numerous bayonet wounds, and there were deep cuts on both forearms, ... [One corpse had been thrown on top of the other. The Konrad brothers were found in a hole in the field near Chromowola; Agathe Konrad and Frau Tober were found in Koneck.

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Both of them were missing half their heads. Peter Bitschke lay, as I heard, with Wilhelm Bölke, his mother, Mrs. Konrad and another Bitschke in the Kaminieck forest. In the Kaminieck churchyard lie a total of 27 murdered ethnic Germans from our village and the immediate vicinity."

Under oath, the witness Ida Albertim, wife of the teacher and cantor in Kaminieck, testified as follows:

"...There are now 26 people buried in the local churchyard who have been gathered here, some of whom have already lain in the ground. I have seen the bodies and can say the following about them:

Some of the persons must have been shot, but in the case of some of the corpses there is no doubt that they were beaten to death or stabbed. Of those killed, 3 were women and 23 men. Of the injuries I saw, I can state the following in detail:

A woman was missing half her face, apparently as a result of a saber cut, a male corpse had three stitches in the chest ... [the gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced].

Those who were only shot were actually still lucky. Near the village of Feyerland, 13 kilometers east-southeast of Bydgoszcz, on November 14, 1939, the badly decomposed body of a man was found, who could then be identified as the farm laborer Wilhelm Sieg from Feyerland, father of two children. This deplorable victim had been bound in such an ingenious manner as could hardly be found again in criminalistic practice. The bondage forced the victim to hold up his hands, which were tied behind his back, in an unnatural manner, always in danger of strangling himself whenever his arms or hands slackened. From the neck led a lead rope, which had not been tied off the corpse and with which the Poles dragged Wilhelm Sieg to death in unspeakable agony.

New corpses were found continuously. On September 24, 1939, four male corpses were found in Matthäi Cemetery in Posen, later identified as Gerhard Grieger, Paul John, Max Otto and Erich Mantehe. They had been murdered and their bodies brought to the cemetery in such a way that pickaxes had been hammered into them, dragging them across the road to the cemetery."

The deaths of twelve Germans in Schultz were reported by the sworn testimonies of Kurt Schulz, Klara Kriewald and Ferdinand Reumann:

"On September 4, Polish soldiers had appeared at the homestead of August Schulz in Schultz and pretended to be looking for weapons. Weapons were also sought from the other German farmers, and in the process Mrs. Klara Kriewald was raped by Polish soldiers.

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Finally, twelve of the Germans were arrested and led into the nearby forest. Kurt Schulz managed to escape. When he later returned to the vicinity of the site to search for the missing who had not returned to the village, he found the earth churned up and, with his father, another ten Schultz farmers only makeshift buried; the twelfth was an unknown man.

All had their eyes gouged out and their teeth smashed in. Some had their throats cut and their stomachs slit. They had been slowly tortured to death by the Polish soldiers."

The tailor Erwin Boy from Ostburg described as a witness how he and a group of fellow sufferers had to lie down at the crossroads Dabrowa with their heads on the road embankment and their feet in the field. After the Germans had been systematically robbed of all their valuables, they had to get up and go into the field. Everyone

was shot immediately. "By the time I 'got there,' 16 had already been shot," Erwin Boy testified. He tried to escape, and although he was wounded, he managed to escape. Apart from him, Eduard Kunitz and Hermann Galster managed to escape. All the others were killed.

Samara, October 13, 1939

The farmer's son Oskar Brakop from Samara appears and declares on questioning after appropriate oath instruction:

"After several house searches had taken place at my place by Polish military with death threats, I fled into the field with my mother and two brothers. After German troops had occupied our village, I returned to my property on Sunday, September 10, 1939. I found it completely plundered. With German soldiers I went in search of the dead. In a field of the Chromowola estate near Straczewo we found ten unburied corpses. From a family Kichert from Straczewo I found there five family members, they were three sons aged 16 to 19 years, their mother and their grandmother. The grandmother was about 60 years old. The husband Richert had apparently not been found. I heard that he had hidden in the barn. Together with him, his two daughters and two younger sons had found shelter without being discovered by the Poles. Jakob Blum and his 19-year-old son, also from Straczewo, were also lying in the field. Furthermore, the farmer Johann Feiertag with his wife, the young Peplau and Mrs. Leschner, a niece of the farmer Blum, who was just visiting him. Mrs. Richert had her eyes gouged out, and the entire top of her skull was smashed in or shot off; Johann Blum, in addition to a bullet wound, had a bayonet thrust; Otto Richert was missing

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the right side of the face. German soldiers took five photographs of these corpses. To which troop these soldiers belonged I do not know. As I heard from Richert's husband, the perpetrators were supposed to have been Polish soldiers who had been ordered to search the villages for Germans and to massacre them."

The farmer's daughter Martha Baar from Wojciechowo appears and declares upon questioning after being instructed to take an oath:

"... First, a simple soldier came into our house. He asked if we were Germans and had many sons. We answered in the affirmative that we were Germans, and with regard to the question about sons I explained that only my 46-year-old brother Karl was present. He had hardly gone out when a Podporucznik (Polish lieutenant) came in and asked my brother to show him his military passport. I was standing in the hallway. My brother Karl, my sister Lydia, my mother, a 13-year-old boy named Arthur Bieser and a Polish girl named Hedwig (9 years old) were in the kitchen. When the Polish lieutenant had read through the military passport, he said in Polish, "It does no harm," turned and walked out. However, he had hardly entered the courtyard when he turned around again and fired from his carbine into the kitchen. First my brother Karl received a shot in the stomach, he immediately sank to the floor, but was not dead. He then shot my sister Lydia, who also fell to the floor, but was able to get up again and run into the garden. She must have lain down there, because we found her there after the German troops had moved in. However, she had several injuries, so she must have been stabbed again in the garden or received more shots. The German military doctor, who arrived about two hours later, bandaged her up, but she died at night from the injuries she had received.

The Polish lieutenant also fired a shot at my mother, but missed. The 13-year-old student Bieser was shot in the shoulder. The last shot was aimed at me, I was still standing in the hallway. He also shot past me. Now my mother and I - the student Bieser and the Polish student Hedwig had run away in the meantime - took the brother Karl, who was not yet dead, into the cellar and wanted to seek shelter there. explained several times that it was no use, that he would have to die soon, and he died soon after. In the meantime the Polish soldiers had set fire to our barn, and the fire was driven by the wind towards our house, so that it finally caught fire as well. We rushed into the open at the last moment and already had to run through the flames. We left my dead brother in the cellar,

so that he burned together with the dwelling house. Only bones were left when we searched for him after the house burned down. When we rushed out into the open, -40-Polish soldiers had already left the yard, but were standing by our garden on the road and firing in the direction from which the German troops were approaching. Two hours later the first German soldiers arrived at our place.

In our village the Polish troops burned down three German homesteads and also shot the farmer Gatzke. Gatzke was about 32 years old."

In a bloodlust that can hardly be described, Poles pounced on the helpless German minority. Here it was not "fascists and militarists" who were slaughtered - they were not even there - but the Germans, who were simply outlawed.

Born of a German mother! That alone was the death sentence for all the tens of thousands of victims of Polish cruelty. There was no mercy; day laborers and manor owners, factory managers and their workers, peasants and citizens, men and women, children and old people fell as if in one bloody cut. And also the German priests. To be a Protestant pastor in those days was life-threatening.

Pastor Friedrich Just (55) from Sienno was murdered there on September 1, Pastor Richard Kutzer (46) on September 3 in Bromberg-Jägerhof, Deacon Willy Lubnau (39) from Posen on September 10 near Kutno, with him Deacon Gurkasch died. Pastor Emil Mix (64) from Streino succumbed to the consequences of severe maltreatment in Lodz on September 20. Superintendent Georg Relsel (75) from Neu-Tomischl died on September 22 in Posen as a result of Polish internment.

Pastor Paul Rudolph (43) from Grätz was murdered on September 10 near Kotsdün, Pastor Johannes Tauber (47) from Sontop also on September 10 near Kotschin, Pastor Johannes Schwerdtfeger (48) from Posen on September 10 near Kutno. Murdered were: The Rev. Oskar Reder (63) from Mogilno at the beginning of September near Chodecz, Rev. and lecturer at the Technical College in Posen Ernst Kienitz (44) at the beginning of September near Turek, Rev. Heinrich Werner (34) from Exin on September 4 near Hohensalza, Rev. Wilhelm Borgmann (30) from Neustadt/Pinne on September 4 near Kotschin, Vicar Max Mieke (25) from Schmieget on September 8 near Turek.

After the German invasion, General Superintendent D. Blau searched in vain in all newspapers for clarification of the fate of missing clergymen, for example, Superintendent Julius Aßmann from Bromberg, Parish Vicar Ernst Fröhlich, Schönsee. They had perished with their parishioners, buried somewhere and probably unrecognizable as a result of the mutilations inflicted on them, just like the more than 45,000 victims who could not be located again.

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But not only the Protestants were treated in such a way, but also the Catholics. In Poznan, on October 5, 1939, the Catholic Father Breitingner testified before the Investigation Office for Violations of International Law at the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht:

"My name is Lorenz Breitingner, religious name Father Hilarius, born on June 7 in Glattbach near Aschaffenburg, pastor of the German Catholics in Poznan, residing in the Franciscan Monastery in Poznan.

On September 1, 1939, at about 6 p.m., a police officer appeared at the monastery gate and declared me arrested. On my request to be allowed to take some laundry and food with me, he replied that this was not necessary, since after a short interrogation I would already be back home in half an hour. Another police officer was waiting in front of the monastery with his sidearm cocked, and both policemen led me with three other arrested men like a felon to the police headquarters. There the police officer who had arrested me pressed an internment certificate into my hand in exchange for a receipt, from which I saw that I was really interned. I met about 20 acquaintances in the police yard, and together with them I spent the night in the open air. During the night, further transports of fellow sufferers arrived from other parts of the city ...

On September 2, 1939, we had to line up in two limbs. A plainclothes police officer, on behalf of the Volvod, then denied us all honorary rights and further remarked that we now had to march to a camp and that anyone who

did not march properly on the street would be shot immediately. The policemen then loaded their rifles, planted the side arms, and now we were led through the streets of Poznań to Głowno. To the crowd waiting on the left and right of the road, the policemen repeatedly shouted: 'These are all Germans' and the response of the crowd was then regularly an unbelievable shouting and raving as well as horrible cursing. At the old market, the crowd was already getting physical, and we received blows from sticks, kicks and stone-throwing, so that by the time we arrived in the suburb of Głowno, we were already covered in bumps. In an inn hall in Głowno, I found hope when a Catholic clergyman, the vicar of Głowno, entered the hall. In particular, I hoped to find understanding and protection for all of us and, above all, information about our future. I was astonished when, after my introduction, he began to examine me to see if I was not a spy in disguise and asked me in a rude tone why I had fought the Poles with a gun in my hand. Completely speechless, I now gave up any attempt at further conversation.

Late in the afternoon, we were led to a large meadow surrounded by a large crowd. More groups came

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There were also internees, among them women and children, two cripples who could hardly walk, war invalids with wooden legs, and a large crowd with bandaged heads whose clothes were stained with blood. In the meadow we had to line up in rows of four and were counted. Then, at the behest of the leader of our guard, who consisted of a few policemen and various high school students in the uniform of the military youth organization, we had to drill and sing a chant of hatred against Germany. Then, to the cheers of the crowd, he had me step forward alone in my religious uniform and drilled with me alone. Finally, he put me in the front row, as it were, as the leader of the insurgents, as we were always called. Thereupon we went on foot to Schwersenz through a line of angry people who spat at us, threw horse manure at us and maltreated us with sticks and kicks. The escort did nothing to protect us from this abuse, or if there was any will to protect us, it was completely powerless and not energetic enough. In Schwersenz, degenerate mobs beat cripples and children sitting on wagons until these sticks were reduced to rubble. The next day I noticed that almost all the chairmen of all German organizations and the entire German clergy had been rounded up. They were all people who were convinced that they had always conscientiously fulfilled their civic duty to the Polish state, and therefore could not understand that they were now being treated even worse than felons.

In Schwersenz, both a Protestant clergyman and I asked to be allowed to exercise pastoral care among the internees. However, I received a rude negative answer from the leader of our escort team. Running the gauntlet, we then continued through Kostrzyn to Wreschen. Here we again received severe caning and kicking. Here my cardinal passed us, who must have recognized us as Posen internees. However, he did not intercede on our behalf. In Wreschen we had to drill again in a hall for a while; we were made to stand up, sit down, kneel down, etc. He especially singled me out. He singled me out, called me a hypocrite and a swindler, and declared that my cross would have to be torn off because I had betrayed him. Around noon the march continued. The guards rode on the wagons together with the sick, and often we had to trot along behind the wagons, if it suited the coachmen to do so. In towns, each of us tried to protect his head from dangerous stone throwing with blankets and coats. It was incomprehensible to me that Polish soldiers, even Polish officers, took part in these abuses in a special way. Thus it sometimes happened that Polish members of the army, who were wearing decorations, walked along our lines and attacked the-

-43- that they could reach, with a very strong kick. From Konin we could not continue our march to Kutno and suddenly marched north. About 7 km beyond Konin our escort left us, leaving a single policeman who was mentally limited. In the meantime we were maltreated by Polish reservists with long blows and stones. We were freed from these by field policemen. On an outpost near Maliniec we were able to lie low for three days, since our policeman first had to get instructions on what to do with us.

Behind Siezen we passed through the first Polish positions and were accommodated behind the town on an estate which was completely occupied by Polish military. Here it was a young Polish lieutenant who threatened us with death under countless imprecations. The next morning we were awakened at 2 a.m. to 'march on'. The wagons with cripples and children stayed behind. Later I heard that they had been shot. It was the whole Schmolke family and another war invalid with one leg. After a forced march we went to Babiak with cannon thunder. In the

afternoon we went on again, after we had now been divided into three groups and numerous soldiers were added to our guard. On a forest road we had to hand over to the soldiers all watches and other jewelry, money and in some cases even wedding rings. When we marched on again on Monday morning, some of us could no longer stand on our feet. In addition to five sick people who could not possibly go on (among them was a teacher from Posen), three healthy people remained behind for their protection. Later we learned that they had simply been shot down by the guards and beaten to death with stones in a brutal manner.

After days of marching back and forth, with the front moving ever closer to us, we were then liberated by German troops on September 17, 1939. Above Breslau we were transported back home by the German Wehrmacht.

Dictated aloud, approved and signed

gez. Lorenz Breitingner (Fr. Hilarius)"

The Catholic priest August Rauhut, born on September 21, 1888 in Dambitsch, district of Lissa, pastor of the German Catholics in Gniezno, gave a report on his experiences in Polish captivity on the fate of his fellow prisoners on September 21, 1939:

"On Thursday, September 14, 1939, the fresh graves in the cemetery in Powitz were dug up by civilians sent by the city of Gniezno, and both Mr. Derwanz and Wiedemeyer were found dead. Wiedemeyer's body was particularly mutilated and showed ins-

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special bleeding wounds on the neck. Both gentlemen were killed by Polish military. Besides these two gentlemen, six other persons from the vicinity of Gniezno were bestially murdered close to their farms by armed civilians. Among them were Kröpf and his son-in-law Brettschneider. To one of the murdered men they had.... [the gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced].

Pastor Rauhut himself was constantly threatened with being shot.

Catholic Father Odilo Gerhard, pastor of the Germans in Krakow, was arrested by the Poles on September 1 and deported with many of his parishioners via Radom-Brestlitowsk to the notorious Bereza-Kartuska internment camp.

In the October 1939 issue of the magazine of the Catholic Mission for Germans Abroad, "Die Getreuen," he described his experiences, excerpts of which are reproduced below:

"At 7:30 in the evening the train arrived in Bereza-Kartuska, and after a hot march of 5 kilometers we arrived at the internment camp at about 8 o'clock. Immediately our ten-man cover was removed. Then we had to run the gauntlet of 200 policemen who beat us with rubber truncheons, rifle butts and wooden slats, not sparing 70-year-old old men. At the training ground we were counted off and then taken to a heated room where everyone had to lie face down on the cement floor. I was just about to lie down when a policeman hit me with a rubber truncheon and dragged me out to the commissar of the camp. He questioned me and ordered me to be taken to the doctors in isolation ward 2 and given better treatment. At the doctors' office I fainted and asked for water.

On September 8, during the medical examination on the training ground, my fellow sufferers said: "They have beaten you all black !" Before they took me to the field without my religious habit, wearing only a shirt and pants, five commanders interrogated me. Each said, "If you are a Roman Catholic clergyman, you are a Pole." I replied, "No, I am a German!" "Yes, a German spy," and already I received a blow with a rubber truncheon on my denial. In the square we had to stand in the blazing heat of the sun and unbearable clouds of dust until evening, without food or drink. Then everything was demanded of us, except for money and the most necessary laundry; even rosaries, medallions, breviaries, etc. had to be handed in, smokes, shaving equipment, nail cleaner.

Then the drill began. We were made to do calisthenics with lying down, sitting down, while a commander constantly beat with a rubber truncheon or even with a log the people who did not perform the exercises fast enough. At 8 o'clock in the evening we were led to our hall:

about 17 meters long, 7 meters wide, 4 meters high, with 16 flatbeds, one above the other. One platform for nine men, whereby only four could have lain reasonably. Since three men over 60 years of age were lying with me, including an Italian who was seriously ill with pneumonia, I lay down under the cot on the cement floor. One bucket of water was given to 140 people, and that only on the third day, just as we received bread only on the fifth day. Maybe 30 grams per head, and it was mushy, so I took only the crusts, kept them for two days and then enjoyed them in small pieces. Hot water soup with a few pearl barley was served differently: once early at 8 o'clock and late at 7 o'clock; then again only once around 11 o'clock. From early 4 a.m. until late 8 a.m. we were in the exercise yard. The doctors advised anyone who was going to fall asleep not to report to the hospital, because he would hardly leave it alive, which proved true for many.

So the days went by. On Sunday, September 10, I asked the commandant for permission to say a prayer together in the hall. The answer was a flood of foul language and blows with a rubber truncheon. The same thing happened when I asked to provide spiritual comfort to the sick and dying.

On the night of Sunday (September 17) to Monday at 3 o'clock we learned that the policemen had fled and that we were free. Soon we were standing in the exercise yard, where I saw again many German Catholics from Krakow and the province of Posen, whom I had pastored. Unfortunately, behind the hospital we found 7 captured German air officers and 16 internees, including those who had been in dark custody, dead with their heads crushed."

The expulsion began already in 1939

With the outbreak of German-Polish hostilities, the Poles drove tens of thousands of ethnic Germans and all Reich Germans who were in Poland toward the east. The farmer Georg Drescher from Czempin and the worker Fritz Kretschmer from Alt-Boyen described the march they had experienced as follows:

"About 400 men, accompanied by police and auxiliary police, our group marched from Schrimm to Schroda via Neu-Tomischl. In Schroda we arrived in the evening and were accommodated for the night in a gymnasium. In the courtyard we received our first beatings from Polish soldiers. Pastor Kienitz was also maltreated here for the first time, by a

-46- Polish ensign. The next noon we marched to Peisern, where we arrived in the course of the evening. There we were housed in a hall into which 50 to 60 men would have fit well. One can imagine how we, 3 to 400 persons lay around here. No one was allowed to go out and relieve himself; we were not given any water either."

During the night the Germans were tied together with ropes in twos, then the march continued via Konin to Turek. It was on this march that the Germans had their first casualties.

The worker Kretschmer testified under oath:

"The old Baron von Gersdorff was retarded. He was already fantasizing from exhaustion. When soldiers stabbed him to make him walk faster, he grabbed this soldier's bayonet to ward off the stab. He was pushed into the ditch, and then a shot was fired. Herr v. Gersdorff sank down dead."

Drescher reported:

"On this way, one of my comrades jumped into a water hole to take his own life. The soldiers fired three shots at him, whereupon he lay in the hole. In the woods we were lined up at the fence of a homestead, and a Polish officer declared that we were condemned to death. Then one of my comrades ran away and was struck down with three shots. It was Fritz Sonnenberg from Czempin. Now we were put on the street and were to be shot in a sand pit. With our hands raised we had to march for kilometers. If our hands became weak, we received bayonet thrusts and butt blows. Behind me I heard shots being fired, from which I had to conclude, especially from the screams of those hit, that once again some comrades had lost their lives Baumeister Bergmann received terrible butt blows, the landowner Hoffmann-Waldau received seven sidearm stabs. I myself received a side-gun thrust in the right arm. Finally we were led to a churchyard and had to lie there on our stomachs with our hands stretched out in front of us. We waited for our death. However, the soldiers used our position to loot us to the last. Some

comrades even had to take off their boots so that they had to walk barefoot. We were then put back on the march and were to be shot in a German cemetery. The march went over farmland, and in the process a comrade lost his cool and wanted to run away. Some shots sent after him put an end to his life. ... The Polish soldiers shot into another group that passed us with rifles and machine guns. This march was a pure death march. The soldiers fired indiscriminately into our ranks. During this march, the landowner Hoffmann-Waldau was also left behind."

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Under oath, the witness Max Hofmann from Schokken, Wongrowitz County, testified as follows:

"... I myself saw, for example, how a woman from the Bromberg group, who could no longer go on and was already mentally disturbed, was beaten to death with a butt by a guard. The 70-year-old war invalid Ernst Kiok from Jaroschau near Wongrowitz, who had not been able to walk for some time and was lying on a wagon, was also pulled off the wagon by the escorts, thrown into a ditch and beaten to death there with the butt. On our way to Lowitsch numerous corpses of interned Volksdeutsche lay to the left and right of the road and also on the road itself, so that we almost tripped over them. It was an unbelievable ordeal moving in the direction of Lowitsch. The military passing by our procession also took part in the maltreatment and the like."

Manager Wilhelm Romann from Wongrowitz testified under oath on September 22, 1939 about the march to Kutno, where the Germans were divided into groups of 1000 men each:

"After about a day and a half we continued in the direction of Wlociawek. There we had to leave the train, and our group of 52 men was led through the town three times, during which we were repeatedly beaten. Aubert's nasal bone was smashed with an air pump. Pastor Rakette was hit in the face with a hard object by a civilian, leaving him covered in blood. When Polish troops encountered us, they beat us with spades, into a group walking behind us they shot with machine guns."

Veterinarian Dr. Schulz from Lissa testified:

"In the afternoon of September 1, the approximately 350 to 400 arrested Germans were brought to Storchnest by a field sergeant of the Polish Army. Among us was 82-year-old Professor Bonin in his underpants and robe, 82-year-old master tailor Tiller and other 70-year-old men were in the procession. There were also women among us. They were not afraid to drag along even small children."

Also during this platoon a number of Germans were shot, among them Gaumer and Weigt, as were other comrades.

Kurt Seehagel, a hairdresser from Rogasen, described how he and two dozen inhabitants of Rogasen were arrested and driven with a group of about 700 Germans in the direction of Warsaw. Between Kutno and Lowitsch a Polish officer, who shot down a German with a pistol, began the killing. Seehagel testified verbatim:

"On the way, the escorts randomly pulled comrades of mine out of the column and killed them in one way or another, de-

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neither by butt blows nor by shots. They dragged me between Lowitsch and Warsaw, i.e. our escorts, also from the group (at night), stayed behind with me and wanted to kill me, that was altogether three men of the escorts. One of them held me by the arm, the other two hit me with pistons. I managed to break away and escape. I was shot through the shoulder by a shot sent after me and fell down. Then I heard shouting: He has had enough. However, I managed to run on and hide until I saw German troops. When I had washed myself, with a fresh shirt from the German troops, and had been bandaged by German medics, I walked with other liberated Volksdeutsche comrades along the marching road that our group had taken earlier. While doing so, I could notice numerous corpses of Volksdeutsche comrades on the road. Most of them were horribly mutilated, their faces were unrecognizable. In my opinion, they had been beaten to death with butts."

The farmer Dr. Albrecht Schubert from Grüne near Lissa testified under oath about his march to the East:

"The Volksdeutsche civilian prisoners consisted of persons between the ages of 14 and 76, including women. No prisoner was up to the exertions of the march, especially since the march had to be carried out without any rations and essentially without shelter and in completely inadequate clothing. The people were mostly dressed only in shirts and trousers, some only in clogs, and some only in one shoe when they were arrested. They had not been given time to dress fully. In general, marchers who could go no further were disposed of by being beaten to death or shot."

The witness Willi Bombitzki from Grätz testified under oath that the German Oskar Rothe from Konkolewo was shot because he had a Reich German passport. The Polish lieutenant shot with his own hand Wilhelm Busch from Neu-Tomischl and other internees. The property director Paul Wiesner from Wollstein also testified in Posadowo on October 4, 1939, that during a transport a first lieutenant shot indiscriminately in person, among others the German Pohlmann from Skalow. The witness Gerd v. Delhaes-Günther from Kreuzfelde, a farmer, also testified under oath that a Polish engineer lieutenant had 13 Germans shot in Schrimm, of whom only nine could be identified because of the terrible mutilation. They were Hermann Raabe, Piechanris; Herbert Raabe, Piechanris; father Steinke, Peterkowal; son Steinke, Peterkowal; Paul Steinke, Peterkowal; Manthel, Piechanris; Wilhelm Nier, Peterkowal; Kint, Peterkowal; Adam, Peterkowal.

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The master baker Otto Kaliske from Rakwitz testified under oath on October 4, 1939, that from his group in Stenschewo the German Neumann from Rakwitz was beaten to death and all 80 persons of the transport were severely maltreated. In Fabianowo the Polish field guards fired indiscriminately at the six wagons, killing the German Druse from Tarnowo and Otto Werner. Most of them were wounded. Those who could not march were doomed. Kaliske reports verbatim:

"As we marched away from Babiak, two women and three men could go no further and remained lying; among them were Herr v. Treskow, aged 65, and Fräulein Dr. Bodinik. In addition, two young men stayed behind with these five for their protection. When we had walked a short distance, we heard shots behind us. After our liberation we received the news that all seven had been shot. In a village before Babiak we had to leave behind the Schmolke family, the invalid without legs, his 15-year-old daughter and his 1-j-ihnge child, and another invalid with one leg named Jentsch. Of these we also heard that they had been shot there."

Germans on the death march

Pastor Leszczynski from Kosten, who took part in the Verschlepptenzug to Turek-Tarnowa, describes the death of 100 Germans in the fields near Tarnowa in the "Ostdeutscher Beobachter" No. 259 of November 9, 1939. The Germans shot and robbed there were found in two mass graves of 30 and 70 horribly mutilated corpses on October 14, 1939:

"It was the 1. September. Wagon columns with refugees were carrying out the city cost. They were greatly hindered by fleeing families of postal and railroad officials who were hurrying to the station with files. In the noon hours a drunken horde of young Poles forced their way into my house and dragged me into the street. Amid hooting and hollering I was taken to the police prison. In a cell I met master carpenter Böhm and master saddler Schön. In the afternoon the arrested Germans were taken to the house of the "Sokol", where their names were ascertained. In addition to Schön, Wegener, Buchholz (father and son), Böhm and myself, who came from Kosten, they were mainly Schmiede residents: Mieke, Halliand, Zugehör and son, etc. In the evening we were taken to the court prison, where a little later new detainees were brought in, who were herded into the cells under piston blows.

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On September 2 we, about 300 men, under the leadership of Constables Wawrzyniak and Schwarz, set out for Czempin via Kawczyn. There we were met by an agitated crowd of people who hurled the most vile insults at us. At the same time the persecution of the Czempin Germans began. Many of them, including Pastor Kienitz, joined our group. Then we went on to Schrimm. In Schrimm we were maltreated for the first time. The march through the streets was like running the gauntlet. We were mercilessly beaten with butts and blows. I myself

received several kicks in the thigh and back. We were not allowed to rest until we were locked up in the monastery courtyard.

The next day we went on to Schroda, where we arrived in the evening hours. Here, too, we were maltreated by beatings and stone-throwing. In a factory yard we had to sit down on the stones.

The leader of the military command, to whom we were now handed over, abused us in the cruelest way. He especially maltreated Pastor Kienitz, Mieke and me.

We continued the march on September 3. During a rest we were joined by Volksdeutsche from Schroda. Among them was Baumeister Gewiese. In Miloslaw we were maltreated by the excited crowd with blows from sticks and stones. Many of us bled from numerous wounds. Towards evening we reached Pyzdry, where we were accommodated in the fire station. For the third day we received nothing to drink. In the early morning hours of the next day, two of the younger ones were tied to each other, after which six such pairs were chained together. The departure was at about 7 o'clock. Only in the afternoon did we get some water. During a rest a shot was fired, and I learned that Herr v. Gersdorff had been shot. Via Drosina we continued towards the Polish front. In the evening twilight we could see the muzzle flash of the guns. All the Germans in my group had sore feet, and it was with difficulty that they dragged themselves away. In Tulishkov soldiers rushed out of their quarters; they hit us and fired shots as well. In the marketplace, where we had to squat down on the pavement, machine guns were set up. We were told that we would be shot. A staff doctor interceded for us, explaining to a major that such butchery was a cultural disgrace. As a result, the execution was not carried out.

During the night we continued. When we drank water at a homestead, the main troop moved away from us. 50 men remained behind, not daring to follow the main troop. We spent the night in a small wood. In the morning some of them, including Dr. Bambauer, left. When we saw that they had been arrested by a guard at the entrance to a village, we fled to nearby wooded areas.

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hill. I couldn't keep up with the others and ended up staying behind alone. From a juniper bush where I was hiding, I heard a series of shots. No doubt captured Volksdeutsche had been gunned down. The forest was surrounded by military. For three days I remained without water and food. I protected myself against the cold of the night by digging a loophole with my hands. After the military had left on the night of September 8, I dared to come out. An elderly peasant took care of me and brought me to Tulishkov, where I was taken to prison. Soon after, ten more Volksdeutsche were brought in, who were part of our detachment of 50 men that had stayed behind. The treatment here was more humane. On September 16, after all Polish authorities had left, we marched to Konin, where we encountered German military.

About the fate of the main troop, from which the 50 men had separated, inquiries brought the following details to light. The Germans had been driven on to Turek. In the village of Tarnowa about 150 men were led from the main road to a side road, where they were ordered to climb the hill unitedly across the open field. Before that, the Poles had placed two machine guns on the hill and posted soldiers on the opposite side, partly in the field and partly in individual homesteads and gardens. As the hounded Germans approached the top of the hill, fire was opened on them from the machine guns. Masses of Germans fell to the ground dead, and the rest threw themselves down. The machine guns fired for several minutes. During a lull in the fire, when new cartridge belts were probably being used, the survivors, some 75 men, jumped up and ran across the hill through a ravine toward a forest about 500 yards away. They were protected against machine-gun fire by the ground level, but now the soldiers positioned on the left flank went into action. A real kettle shooting started on the Germans running for their lives. Most of them were shot, only a few reached the forest. Immediately after that the riffraff of soldiers left the hiding places. The dead or severely wounded Germans, lying there in groups or singly, were worked over with butts and bayonets. Then the corpses were robbed and superficially buried. Five days later, at the behest of the Polish Civil Administration, the dead Germans were buried by surviving Germans from Tarnowa at the cemetery fence in Tarnowa in two mass graves of 30 and 70 bodies. These were mass graves reported by the Posener Tageblatt on October 17.

The German women in Tarnowa tell that the majority of the German male population of Tarnowa was bestially martyred to death.

was. One German had his eyes gouged out. He was then driven to the next village, where he was beaten to death."

This is what it looked like in Polish concentration camps

The "Posener Tageblatt" of October 27, 1939, published an account of the experiences of the director of the Kopiera shift company from Warsaw, who had experienced the hell of the Polish concentration camp in Bereza-Kartuska:

"In the Polish internment camp of Bereza-Kartuska 5786 persons, including 3500 Germans and 1600 Ukrainians, were imprisoned when they were liberated on the night of September 17-18. The tortures the prisoners had to endure in the hell of Bereza-Kartuska are a terrible indictment of the former Polish government, according to whose instructions the deportation and maltreatment of the Reich and ethnic Germans took place. The suffering of the Germans deported to Bereza-Kartuska is reported, among other things:

The "mildest kind of maltreatment was the daily running of the gauntlet under the rubber truncheons of the policemen. More gruesome were the daily beatings inflicted on the Germans with fence posts and clubs by the Polish felons assigned as "instructors" and released solely for this purpose. German and Ukrainian women were also subjected to these maltreatments. Those who could no longer bear the cruelty and collapsed were "beaten to death", i.e. horribly beaten with clubs over the kidneys. What was interpreted as "resistance" was usually the last defensive movement before physical collapse and was used as a pretext for shooting. 158 Germans were killed in this way in Bereza-Kartuska! Methodical and unnecessary cruelty of treatment of the imprisoned Germans and Ukrainians were the order of the day. Putting the Germans up against the wall, loading rifles and pointing them at them or chasing them in front of machine guns, shooting some of them, but torturing the others in the idea of death agonies, trampling on the defenseless victims of this sadistic revenge of the inferiors with boots and increasing the maltreatment from day to day until the tortured one was 'ripe' to be shot down, this Polish cruelty was applied in the internment camp Bereza-Kartuska in an unimaginable way."

War crimes against German soldiers

But not only German civilians were the victims of these Polish atrocities, but also German soldiers who temporarily fell into Polish captivity.

The master dyer Wilhelm Karl Petrak from Lodz, who was forcibly mobilized on September 3 and transferred to the 4th Heavy Artillery Regiment of the Polish Army, witnessed as a member of the Polish Army how two German teachers were beaten to death with blacksmith's hammers on September 6 near Głowno on the orders of the Polish lieutenant.

W. K. Petrak stated as a witness before the Investigating Office for Violations of International Law at the OKW before the War Court Counselor Zirner, among other things: "At the end of September, I think it was the 23rd, we found the bodies of six German soldiers on a dirt road between Chelm and Rejowiec. They had been horribly mutilated. The mouth of every single soldier was stuffed very tightly with tobacco, so that the teeth stood very far apart. The tobacco had apparently been stuffed in with a piece of wood. We were able to get the tobacco out only with difficulty. Rifle bullets with casings had been stuffed into the soldiers' noses, into each nostril. The corpses were also completely robbed. I did not find any identifying mark. We then buried the bodies."

Before the Investigating Office for Violations of International Law at the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, on September 18, 1939, the non-commissioned officer Schloerb appeared before Regierungsrat Schölz and Regierungsoberinspektor Franz and made the following statement, which he swore to:

"My name is Helmut Schloerb, I was born on January 14, 1917 in Berlin-Friedrichsfelde, single, non-commissioned officer in the music corps of the tank regiment 15 Sagan. I am a musician. I joined the army on April 16, 1936. Since October 1937 I have been a member of Panzer Regiment 15.

On Saturday, September 9, our music corps was sent home from the front, I think from Annahäuser, because our omnibus was too cumbersome and hindered the troops. When we had been driving for about ¹/₂ hour, we came to the village of Stopnica. Suddenly we saw Poles. When we realized that they were Polish soldiers, we were already close. Therefore the driver tried to drive through. In doing so, he hit a house wall. He immediately backed up and drove forward for a short distance, then the car stopped. At the same moment rifle and machine gun fire started. A grenade, probably 4.7 cm in caliber, hit the rear of the car. We returned fire with our pistols. I shot a magazine. Then the Poles took us out of the car. We were led into a house, where they took all the belongings we had with us. I lost a camera worth 60 RM, a wristwatch and a fountain pen. On this occasion I told a Polish sergeant that I was an auxiliary sick-bearer. They wanted to beat me with the butt of a rifle.

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Then we were led to a cemetery. There we were lined up in twos. Then they counted off 8 men who were to be shot, as we were told by signs. An old Polish soldier also told us that we would be shot. He added that he himself did not want it, but that most of his comrades were from the border and had a great anger against the Germans. Suddenly a shell hit nearby. Thereupon we were driven out of the place and had to march a whole tent. We had to take turns carrying a comrade who had a painful leg shot. At about 8 p.m. the Poles stopped. They led us through the trench on the right and lined us up in 2 limbs in a meadow. The whole escort of 70 to 80 men stood around us at first. Then something was shouted in Polish in the rear, and the Polish soldiers went behind our backs one by one. I immediately had the feeling that we were to be shot. Suddenly the firing started. I threw myself down immediately. The Poles fired from rifles and machine guns for about 10 minutes, after which I heard only individual shots. Some comrades shouted, "Let us live!" Then I knew that those who were still alive would get a catch shot. The Poles came up to me and stabbed me 3 times in the thigh with the sidearm. I did not make a sound so as not to give myself away.

After that there was silence for about a quarter of an hour. The Poles were discussing something with each other. I carefully straightened up to see how it looked around me. There I saw probably 20 to 30 comrades lying dead. I then noticed that the dead were being dragged into a barn. I, too, was lifted up by 2 men and taken there. The Poles laid a layer of straw on me and on the straw two dead comrades. What happened next I do not remember. When I regained consciousness, there was fire all around me. The flames were already near me. I pulled up my legs and pushed the two dead men out into the open. As they fell down outside, machine-gun fire started. I myself ran through the machine gun fire to a potato field. There I rolled back and forth and smothered the flames that had already seized my entire uniform.

I then walked, partly crawled, partly ran for about 500 meters until I came to a ditch. In this I stayed until about 4-5 o'clock in the morning. When I saw no one at dawn, I walked to the west. On the way I met Private Gawron, who escaped unhurt. With him I hiked on. Around 9 o'clock we came across a German infantry column, which took us to a medical squadron. From there I got to Krakow."

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Murdered airmen, but no airmen trials French and British shot emergency landed airmen

When the German cities and partly even the villages sank into rubble, hundreds of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people fell victim to this criminal area bombing of German residential areas, it regrettably happened that rushed Germans, on the verge of despair, killed emergency-landed Allied airmen. These acts are no more excusable than the bombing of German neighborhoods.

After 1945, guilty and even more innocent Germans were convicted and also executed for this in Allied air trials. In the Western campaign there were war criminal murders of German airmen from the very first moment.

The German News Bureau carried the following report in its issue of 1 June 1940:

"War correspondent von Heinze writes on 14. 5.1940: On 12 May Frenchmen tied up and murdered a German airman who had fallen into their hands slightly wounded. The German medical officer who had examined the dead man gave me the following report: "On May 12, towards evening, I was on the road between Bilzen and Maastricht with my department commander on the way back from the superior office, when we saw parts of an

apparently shot-down aircraft that had made an emergency landing in a field to the enemy's side of the road. It was a German dive bomber with its squadron crest. Walking around the plane, we saw a dead soldier lying on the right side of the fuselage, his face covered with a cloth. He was lying on his back, and I noticed that his hands were tied with a thin leather strap. I took up the blanket to determine the cause of death. In doing so, I realized that it was a non-commissioned officer with EK II and the aircraft commander. The face and head were covered with blood. Above the left eyebrow I noticed a near-shot opening, the edges of which would have been blackened. The right eye was badly puffy, and the right corner of the mouth was torn open by a deep incision. The right ear was torn through in the middle. The lower part was hanging down. On the right side of the neck the dead man had a deep stab wound the size of a five-mark piece, which exposed the neck vessels and had struck the carotid artery."

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From all the findings it was clear that the sergeant had fallen into the hands of the French without any particular injuries and had been first tied up and then murdered in the vilest manner."

The war correspondent Dr. L. Schulte-Strathaus writes on 18 Mal 1940:

"Not far from La Capelle - en Thierache, an atrocity by French colonial troops occurred in the evening hours that cannot be surpassed in its atrocity. Two German airmen, who had the misfortune to fall into the captivity of Moroccan troops, were maltreated and cut down in the vilest manner. According to the reports of a German tank crew and the testimony of the prisoners, the incident took place as follows: The aircraft, which had made a forced landing, was immediately the target of fierce infantry attacks. The occupants first helped themselves by blocking one wheel and keeping the engine running so that the plane turned in circles. Nevertheless, they were soon overpowered and led away. In the meantime, German tanks arrived and tried to wrest their prisoners back from the Moroccans. In the skirmish that now developed, they succeeded in breaking up the enemy. The two German airmen, however, were found murdered a short time later. One had been shot in the neck, the other had been brutally maltreated by the Moroccans before his death; his abdomen had been pierced with bayonets and he had then been shot.

On 18.5.1940 a twin-engine He 111, registration B-3-JT was so badly damaged by English aircraft in air combat that it had to make an emergency landing near the village of Vlmy, on the right of the Arras - Lens road. The crew got out with their hands up. French soldiers and gendarmes nevertheless opened fire and shot three of the crew.

A surviving sergeant was led 400 meters further, severely maltreated there and also shot.

The autopsy of the four corpses was performed on June 2 by Chief Medical Officer Professor Dr. Klinge and two subspecialists, and the findings were as follows:

- a) The sergeant was shot in the right hip by a close-range bullet (burn shot). The bullet hole is located on the right collarbone. In addition, the head has strong bloodshot areas resulting from maltreatment.
- b) The corporal's body shows a shot to the skull, which was fired from behind by means of a pistol (burn shot). Bloodshot areas on the head and body also indicate maltreatment.
- c) The corporal's body shows a pistol shot in the abdominal area. In this case, too, bloodshot areas are found on the body of the corpse, which can be attributed to maltreatment.

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- d) The soldier's body shows a shot to the head. It is also a close-range shot (burn shot)."

Englishmen shot down German

On June 5, 1940, German NCO Paul Weinholz was at a barber shop in Charleroi. There the Belgian physician Dr. Arbalestrie, 316, Rue de la Motte, Courcelles-Motte, informed him that he had to witness how English soldiers shot down a downed German fighter pilot who had to make an emergency landing, so that he was

seriously injured by a chest shot and two leg shots.

Dr. Arbalestrie recovered the seriously wounded man, who claimed to be Otto Tesmann from Berlin-Weißensee, and transferred him to his clinic. When the Englishmen departed on May 29, they appeared at the clinic and took the severely wounded man away with them.

In the village of Semuy, the assistant physician Dr. Eugen Binder found a completely burned corpse on June 11, 1940. In his report of June 11 it says about it:

"The body was lying on its back on a bed of burlap and cardboard. The torso, arms and legs were wrapped with burlap. An iron splint lay between the legs in the direction of the body, and around the abdomen were the remains of a leather strap with rings. The body showed no puncture or gunshot wounds. There were still larger remnants of field-grey uniform on the corpse. Identification tag was missing. It is safe to assume that a German soldier was wrapped in burlap and burned alive. The death may have occurred about a few days ago (two to four days)."

War correspondent Juergen Sp. testified that after emergency landing on the Hirson - La Capelle road, he observed the French grab two German airmen of a second aircraft that had made an emergency landing and drag them into the woods.

"Both soldiers were found murdered. One, a lieutenant, had been killed by two shots to the neck; the second, a sergeant, had bled to death from several shots through the chest and numerous stabs to the abdomen. A doctor determined the cause of death."

Sergeant Matzenbacher was taken prisoner by the French together with Medical Sergeant Theodor Schroiff of the I./K. 6 and Private Penz. On May 17, 1940, at Guise, Matzenbacher and Penz were freed again, seriously wounded. They had been badly beaten with rifle butts and boot heels. Sergeant Schroiff had been beaten to death in the process.

Private Bernd K., who had fallen wounded into captivity and had been liberated again, gave the following statement on June 1, 1940, at the field hospital Bolsleux near Arras

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that he was taken prisoner during the fighting on the Somme on May 24 with Sergeant B. and another 11 soldiers. A French NCO ordered "the 13 German prisoners to kneel in a row, then he designated the soldiers who had been decorated with the EK and shouted to his soldiers, "The decorated are to be shot immediately." Thus, six German soldiers who were wearing awards for bravery were summarily shot.

War correspondent Dr. Schulte-Strathaus writes on June 3, 1940:

"... a German non-commissioned officer of a rifle company, lying wounded, was found with his throat cut as we gained ground in the counterattack."

On June 2, 1940, the "Nation Beige" reported:

"A farmer named Rene Duprete told that fierce fighting had taken place southwest of Lillie between French and German soldiers. Senegalese troops took part in it. On our retreat one night we came to Ariches. Accustomed to the devastation and destruction, we looked for a place to hide. We were seized with terror: In the cellar lay twelve to fourteen German soldiers with their throats cut."

Wounded Private Heinz Herrmann of Flak Regiment 1.4./29 stated at the Avesnes military hospital on June 1, 1940, that he had been taken prisoner on May 27 and had seen black French soldiers shoot surrendering German soldiers and wounded men who cried out for help.

Of the numerous Allied incursions during the Western campaign, the cases cited clearly proved that war crimes were committed not only by the Poles, but also by the French and their British allies.

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Dutch without mercy 411 Germans had to die

On the 9th of May 1940, the Germans and the Dutch were still sitting peacefully in their clubs of the Societe, the Concordia, making the cups go round. The women exchanged their kitchen and servant experiences with each other and it was as always on the islands of Royal NetherlandsA India, which today are called Indonesia.

On May 10, however, all Germans throughout Indonesia became fair game in one fell swoop. Dutch colonial troops, consisting mainly of Ambo-nese and Minadonese, arrested men, women and children. Reason for arrest: to be a German.

The detention proceeded according to the character trait of the exercising Dutchmen. Here the arrested were treated with cool but humane courtesy, which, regrettably, was quite rare, there scornful and mischievous, there brutal and inhuman. Highly deserving doctors, who had worked for the colony all their lives, missionaries, government officials, businessmen, and planters were even hunched over by their hands and feet, sometimes for days.

The German missionary Gottlob Weiler, who met the fate of his compatriots in Borneo, was arrested in Bandjarmasin with all the other German men, first locked up in the barracks and, as he describes in the book of the English mission publishing house Stuttgart "On the Streets of the World", treated like a criminal. When a Dutchman entered the rooms where the Germans were lying, he was accompanied by soldiers who stood in front of the Germans either with drawn sabers or with carbines ready to fire.

On May 11, the Germans were loaded from Bandjarmasin onto a truck completely wrapped in spiked wire. Each German was led individually to the car, each time accompanied by two policemen with drawn weapons. When the Germans were all seated on the truck, the whole thing resembled a predator's cage. So they were finally presented to the now accumulated crowd of natives, who could feast on this spectacle for an hour. Then they were taken 135 kilometers into the interior of Borneo to Kandan-gang and again with others first in a market hall, then in

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imprisoned in a school. It was not until October 17, 1940 that the German prisoners were transported back to Bandjarmasin under the same circumstances and finally shipped to Java.

The 1200 Germans from Batavia came to the island of Unroest. How they were treated there is shown by the case of "Frühstück". This one, a German consular officer from Singapore, escaped on a prau to Java at the outbreak of war, where his fate awaited him. He was standing near the barbed wire watching his comrades when he was shot down for no reason at all by a Dutch sergeant. German doctors who tried to assist the man, who had been badly hit in the lungs, were driven back with guns drawn. The commandant of Unroest, a Herr De Vries, rushed out of his office, pistol in hand, and all he had to say about this unprecedented incident was his question to the sergeant: "Haeb je hem neergelegd?" Did you kill him? -

The poor breakfast got no help. He remained lying alone for hours, although many helpful doctors feverishly tried to help him. When he bled to death, he was hastily buried. Later this became the "Mutiny of Unroest".

From this island of misery, where there were no sanitary facilities, no mat, not even enough drinking water, they went to different camps. Their names are numerous. The treatment and conditions were almost the same everywhere. In Ambarawa, in Mangelang or even in the notorious Ngavi, the former dreaded punishment garrison of the Dutch military. Here, in the domain of the Dutch Colonel Siereveld, colonial sadism raged unrestrained. Fifteen-year-olds were punished for minor things with dark detention for up to three months, only

to be thrust out into the brightest sunlight. Corrective punishments were imposed for every little thing. The food consisted almost entirely of rice, and it was so little that the prisoners almost starved to death. Drinking water was almost non-existent. All this became unimaginable torture.

When the prisoners' spokesman approached Colonel Siereveld for relief, he replied curtly, "You'll get the same as my soldiers, who use it to perform at the highest level." The scorn was all the greater since, as is well known, no live shot had yet been fired in Indonesia at that time, except against defenseless prisoners. The Japanese prisoners, who were interned in separate camps, suffered even more miserable and brutal treatment. They died in droves. Depending on their "dangerousness," the German women and children were sent to Tjibadak near Batavia or to Banjoebiron in East Java, and in some cases to Sindanglaya. Here, too, the rations were miserable everywhere, and everyone suffered from a lack of drinking water. The children drank dirty water in their ignorance; the result was dysentery. Doctors were not available.

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The assets as well as the property of the Deutsdien were confiscated and auctioned off by the Dutch colonial government. Whoever wanted could buy German property at the lowest prices, sometimes for a quarter, sometimes for a tenth of the value. And of course everyone wanted to, Dutch, Chinese and Indonesians. The proceeds obtained were retained for "board and guard expenses."

The astonishing thing was the fact that the Dutch also arrested and treated in the same way all those former Reich Germans, Austrians and even Hungarians who had acquired Dutch citizenship years before, sometimes decades ago. The drama escalated to grotesqueness when even Dutch officers, still in uniform, were admitted to the prison camp. An English Jew, whose wife was a native of Düsseldorf, was also arrested because his wife played a social role in the German colony, and perhaps because he owned one of the largest restaurants and six movie theaters in Batavia ...

On October 17, 1940, the German prisoners departed from Borneo and were transported by ship to Java to be unloaded at the port of Surabaya. The Germans were only allowed to leave the ship at a distance of 25 meters, one behind the other. Their path was lined by countless soldiers, some of whom held their firearms threateningly in their hands, others stood there with drawn sabers. Railroad transports took them to Fort Ngavi. After some time the camps were moved again. In August 1940, the first transports of German prisoners from all over Indonesia were sent to Kotatjana, where an internment camp for 2400 German civilian internees was built near an abandoned Sisal plantation. While here the rations were not objectionable and only the fact that the camp was set up in a completely malaria-infested area aggravated the situation, in the Sumatran camp of Bangkalan conditions were even more miserable than on Java. In Bangkai an sAor all the DeutsAen were bald despite the blazing tropical sun, and beatings were the order of the day.

The catastrophe of Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, hit the Dutch hard. They immediately began to take away their prisoners and brought them to Sibolga on the west coast of Sumatra. Here three large transports were assembled to bring the prisoners to "siAerity" from a possible Japanese invasion naA British India. They were crammed together like herrings on the SAiffs, given one beAer of fresh water per day per man, which was niAt once clean, and sAleAtest food. All this in durAsAnittliA aAt thirty degree heat.

When the Dutch transport officer handed over the first transport in Bombay to the British with the words: "I bring you 600 German sailors and criminals" (Ich

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bring you 600 German sailors and criminals), the British officers turned around reveling. The British army doctor refused to take over the ragged, half-starved wretches even after a cursory inspection, since the necessary ambulances had to be brought in first. This was only possible after two hours. The Germans were properly fed for the first time. Since they had always been forced to squat on the ground under the threat of the most severe punishments, they immediately crouched down on the ground in the harbor shed where they had been temporarily housed for protection from the sun.

The Indian NCOs, seeing a white person so humiliated for the first time in their lives, became quite nervous and

shouted for the prisoners to rise. The second transport also arrived safely in Bombay. The prisoners were transported on by the British to Ramgarh near Calcutta.

The third transport was from Kotatjana with 477 men, who were transported in fifteen trucks to Sibolga and here loaded onto the transport ship "Van Imhoff". Before boarding the ship Germans had been deprived of all knives, scissors and mirrors as a precaution. The accommodation below deck in the most unbearable heat of the tropical sun next to the hot engine room was torturous enough. All openings to the outside were sealed with barbed wire, even the hatches.

On January 18, 1942, the ship finally set sail. Among the prisoners were nine who had lost their minds due to the hardships they had to endure.

At 10 a.m. on January 19, a Japanese naval aviator sighted the transport and mistook it for a Dutch military transport because the ship was not marked as a prisoner transport under Geneva Convention regulations.

The Japanese airplane attacked the transporter with bombs. Already by the first bomb the ship was lifted out of the water and remained with smashed propeller unmaneuverable.

Needless to say, the prisoners were very uneasy. Then the Dutch captain came to the hatch and officially told the prisoners that there was no reason to worry, that he would be the last one to disembark anyway if something happened.

In fact, he had already ordered his crew to prepare to leave the ship.

Three more bombs fell so close to the ship that the ship's side was torn open and the "Van Imhoff" lay on her right side.

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In all haste the Dutch sailors and soldiers now launched the lifeboats, except for one, and harnessed a steam launch.

The prison rooms below deck remained locked. The captured Germans, who soon realized what was going on, panicked. They broke open the floating coffin and rushed on deck. A German sailor who tried to quickly let himself into one of the lifeboats by a rope was shot at by the Dutch, wounded and fell into the water. Finally, however, the Dutch sailors pulled him into the boat. He was the only one of the 477 German prisoners to be rescued by the Dutch.

The Germans were horrified to discover that the Dutch had previously destroyed the ship's pumping equipment....

In 1946, a Dutch officer confessed to missionary Weiler, who was on the ill-fated ship, that there had been an order not to be involved in rescuing Germans in the event of a shipwreck.

The Dutchmen quickly steamed away with their steam launch and left the German prisoners to their fate. Only two boats were still on board, namely a lifeboat for 53 people and a working dinghy, a so-called Viet, for 14 people.

With difficulty they managed to clear the two boats. Overfilled to the bursting point, so that they were barely a hand's breadth out of the water, they pushed off, rowed with plank paddles for lack of the oars that had been destroyed by the Dutch.

The desperate remaining prisoners tried to make rafts and to use the kapok mattresses as a means of rescue. In the bulkheads the water was rising continuously. One of the lunatics had seized a Dutch revolver left behind and was shouting confused orders on the bridge until he could finally be disarmed. More and more of those, some of whom were unable to swim, drowned in the floods. Many gave it up. Some hanged themselves when they saw that the ship was sinking further and further. Others opened their wrists. One doctor, in possession of enough Veronal tablets, poisoned himself. Still others had vomited up the canteen and got drunk on Genever. And the ship sank and sank. For seven hours.

Meanwhile, the two boats, equipped only with a single pocket compass, had rowed in the direction of the island of Nias. The next morning they were overflown by a Dutch military plane. A little later, the Dutch motor ship "Boelongan" approached, and with tears in their eyes, the doomed men sank into each other's arms.

The Boelongan stopped, and the skipper asked in a resounding voice, "Are there any Dutchmen or Englishmen among you?"

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An icy shiver took possession of the prisoner. Perhaps the voice had trembled a little when she answered, "No, only German prisoners." But she gave the answer courageously, believing in the self-evident helpfulness at sea.

The Dutch captain wished a speedy ascension and even refused to refill an empty water bucket held out to him with a request for water. The Boelongan turned away and sailed away.

Half starved and thirsty, they paddled on in the blazing heat of the sun. January 21 passed, people wrapped wet rags around their heads and rowed on with sore, torn hands.

The 22nd of January passed. Some rinsed the palate with salty lake water from insane thirst and came from the frying pan into the fire.

On the 23rd, many became unconscious. But in the distance, like a strip of fog, they sighted land. With the courage of despair, they paddled on.

On January 24, the land could be clearly seen. But it was not until the 25th that they were ready. The boat was wrecked in the high surf, and two prisoners drowned. On land they sank into a death-like sleep.

They had landed on Nias. The native Bataks immediately provided the Germans with sweet potatoes, slaughtered a pig and prepared a feast for them. The Bataks are a tribe which consists mostly of pagans.

The "Christian" Dutchmen soon received word and approached. They re-arrested the 65 rescued and took them to Gunungsitoli, 60 kilometers away, where they were again locked up in prison. The other 411 Germans had drowned.

This was the last transport. The German prisoners still in the country remained where they were and were eventually liberated by the Japanese.

*

On top of that, there is an official document about the whole sad "Van Imhoff" affair, which the "Interessenverband der vertriebenen Hollanddeutschen im Bundesgebiet e. V., Düsseldorf" has sent a copy of. The document reads:

Transcript "Negotiated at Bielefeld on June 20, 1949. Before me, the undersigned notary in the district of the Higher Regional Court at Hamm, Bernhard Grünewald, with the official seat at Bielefeld, appeared today, personally known, the planter Albert Vehring from Bielefeld, Friedrich-Ebert-Straße 8.

The aforementioned handed over to the notary the document attached to these minutes and stated:

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The handed over writing is written by me. The statements made therein correspond to the truth. I make them the content of my declaration before the notary today. - Having been made aware of the significance of a sworn statement, I affirm before the notary on oath that the information given is correct and that I know of nothing that would contradict the correctness of my statements contained in the document. - The minutes and the annex have been submitted to the party concerned, expressly approved by him and signed by his own hand as follows:

gez. A. Vehring, signed. Bernhard Grünewald,
Notary."

Annex to the Minutes of June 20, 1949 (Cert. Roll No. 61/49) (Seal) signed. Bernhard Grünewald, Notary Public.

"The transport of us went on 18. 1. 42 from Sibolga on Sumatra with a total of 477 men civilian Germans on

board the "van Imhoff" in order to bring us, at that time still unknown to us, to Bombay. Our accommodation was the worst imaginable. Imagine the tween deck of our approx. 1500-2000 t ship, the height probably about 2.20 meters. This height was divided into 2 parts with planks, so there was a good 1,- meter left as height for each layer. The width of our cage was about 2 meters. In front of it, barbed wire ran along its entire length, leaving an opening every 12-15 meters or so, which led into a narrow guarded passage. Thus, the whole aft tween deck was divided. If one had to do his needs, one had to crawl away over the other. The ship was occupied by prisoners only in the stern, the hatches were open but covered with barbed wire. The aft deck was also subsequently occupied by 100 men, who were supposed to stay behind at first, but were then embarked.

On 29. 1. the ship was bombarded 3 times by the Jap plane at 97 degrees east longitude and 20 min. south latitude. The last bomb was fatal for the ship. The ship shook violently. The bomb had in all probability entered the water next to the forecastle and exploded under water. This probably caused the whole ship to leak. From our side there was no panic, because we did not know at the moment how great the damage was. Also, very soon the I officer of the ship came and told us that nothing significant had happened to the ship, but still would be telegraphed for help. Shortly after, all the boats hanging in the davits were launched. The crew and guards abandoned ship, leaving us in our prison. A German Walkowiak, who now let himself into the water at the Manntau, was shot through the hand by the Dutch. This is the only one that the Dutch then

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recorded. The Germans then broke their prison. One looked around the ship. From a distance I could still see the Dutch lifeboats. Lifeboats seen. But they were getting more and more distant, being towed by a motor pinasse. They were very large, so-called landing craft, each holding 60 to 70 men. The ship was very well known to me, since I was often on board before the war. We Germans could all have been rescued in the currently calm sea with the Holl. if the intention to rescue had been present. When I came onto the forecastle, we found the workboat lying on deck, and with a few people we brought it into the water without difficulty. Unfortunately, it was very small. It held only 14 men. On the stern, amidships, there was another small lifeboat. The Dutch had probably tried to launch it, but it was probably not fast enough for them, because it was stuck in the staples. Axe strokes in the staples testified to the attempt, and all oars had been removed from the boat. The boat was marked as a lifeboat and could hold 42 men according to the address. However, it was manned by 53 men. The other Germans built rafts, because we knew that the ship was slowly filling up with water. Especially the forecastle, but also the boiler room and the engine room running full of water. After the lifeboat with 53 men left for Nias, our boat went to port halyard to gear up for the trip. It was getting towards evening when we feared that the ship was sinking, and now kept ourselves at about 100 meters from the ship. In the meantime, some rafts also joined us, and soon the "van Imhof" also suddenly sank. A large part of the people were on the rafts, a part still on board. Behind our boat many rafts had gathered. It was agreed to stay together for the night, since we believed that help was coming. The next day, however, we had only 2 rafts left behind us, one of them very large, the others had drifted away. On January 20, at about 8 a.m., a Dutch. Airplane and waved to us, pointed to the north, from which we assumed that a ship was coming, and indeed it did not take long when we saw something coming up. It then turned out to be a K. P. M. motor ship, probably the "Bodeleng". It came within 100 meters of us and called out to us, "Are you Dutch? We replied in the negative. From the raft, one of us had swum to the ship, but when he got to within 10 meters, he was turned back. It was now clear to all of us that we could not expect any help from the Dutch. The ship now sailed a little further to the accident site about 1 nautical mile from us. Again a Jap plane came and bombed it, but without apparent success. A rain squall now came up and we had enough to do with ourselves to keep our heads above water.

On 21. 1. at noon we had to separate from the rafts because we could not move from the spot. This was the saddest moment for all of us, because

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we suspected what this meant. - We shared our available water supply and provisions, promised to provide help as soon as possible, and parted.

On 23. 1. in the afternoon we reached the island of Nias. We were completely exhausted. The Niasser on the west

coast are mountain dwellers and have no boats. It was not possible for us to send help to those left behind. On the 24th I. in the morning we were interned again by the Dutch, and they did not think of giving help to the Germans. We were interned in Goe-noeng Sitoli on Nias. After a few weeks I had to go to the guardroom. Here I met the controller of the island of Poel Tello Mr. Winkel, whom I knew from before. I had to tell him the story of the shipwreck and also told him that we had already recorded the events. He confirmed this and told me: "Yes, but that's not true, our process verbal (protocol) reads differently. They mutinied after the bombing, and that is why they were not saved." I then said that the I. Offz. had even commended us for our calm behavior. He replied: "Yes, here on the island of Poel Tello the ship's crew and a German landed. He would have recorded the report of the sinking himself, and the German would also have signed it. The German was the sailor Walkowiak. Later in Padang he made the statement that he was forced by the Dutch to sign the protocol. At that time on Poel Tello one did not know yet that other Germans had been saved, and so before the hand their protocol seemed also credible. It was clear to us when we met the motor ship on the 20th that there was an order from above not to rescue any Germans.

In this accident 411 civilian internees from Dutch India perished, 67 saved themselves in the two boats. Of these, one died during the landing on Nias, and one committed suicide by hanging shortly after the landing.

gez. A. Vehring"

"The foregoing recorded under number 61 of the Register of Deeds for 1949 is hereby executed and issued as the first copy to Mr. Albert Vehring in Bielefeld, Friedrich-Ebert-Strasse 8.

Bielefeld, June 22, 1949 (Seal)

gez. Bernhard Grünewald, Notary

Costs: Fee § 43 RKO 16,- DM

Value: 3000,- DM Value added tax- 48 DM
16,48 DM

gez. Grünewald, Notary Public.

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Merciless war in the east

This is how the Soviets carried out their fight against German landers

From the first day of the Russian campaign, serious, almost unspeakable war crimes were committed. Without exception by the Red Army soldiers of the Soviet Army on defenseless German prisoners.

Long before the ghastly actions of the SD Einsatzkommandos got underway, the Soviets tortured and murdered the officers and soldiers who had fallen into their hands on the entire front.

It was this Soviet mass murder that determined the merciless harshness of the battle on the Eastern Front. The Red Army, in which the murder of the defenseless was officially ordered and handled, had to expect a sharp reaction from the comrades of the murdered from the outset. This is the only way to explain and understand many regrettable things that happened in the East, also on the part of the Germans. To denounce the reaction to Soviet war crimes over and over again, while systematically concealing the horrific causes, which then led to harsh retaliatory measures, is not only sheer hypocrisy, but also a fraudulent attempt to convey a one-sided, tendentious picture of history to posterity.

The reports, crime reports of unit leaders, transcripts of testimonies before field courts, the Wehrmacht Investigation Office for Violations of International Law at the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, the reports to the Foreign Office, as well as documents in the so-called war crimes trials against German army leaders in Nuremberg, show in documentary form that from day one the Soviets waged a war of murderers, not soldiers, against the Germans in many places.

For the time being, we will not talk about the criminal struggle of the partisans, who, avoiding open combat, conducted all their operations in principle only from ambush. This chapter deals exclusively with crimes committed by the official Red Army.

The Soviet Union was not a party to the Hague Land Warfare Regulations of 1899 and 1907, nor to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of July 29, 1929. Long before the outbreak of the Second World War, it refused to accept any human obligations in this area.

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The company is also prepared to enter into any commitments so that it does not have to impose any restrictions on its units in the event of an emergency.

As a result of the limited space available for this, only a tiny excerpt from the documents that were in my possession can be published here. From the mouths of the junior corporals, non-commissioned officers and sergeants, officers, troop doctors and field priests, the shocking picture of the naked, brutal truth of how the Red Army conducted the war arises before us.

All statements are taken from official documents. The language they speak is abundantly clear. They do not require any further comment.

Message

Local accommodation 26 June 1941

Crossing the border, the 6th Company reached Point 38 and the homesteads north of it at about 4:10 a.m. on 22 June 41, connecting with the III Battalion. Here the approaching company received heavy fire from tree and

sniper fire, 1 NCO and 3 men fell in the tent from 4:50 to 5:00. About 8.00 o'clock the undersigned company commander, First Lieutenant Hundwieser, and Sergeant Tratzki observed and ascertained by their own observation and inspection that the hedge and tree gunners were killing lying wounded men of the 7th and 5th Companies of the Infantry Regiment with butt thrusts bayonet thrusts, and tearing off the pants of one, with the intention of cutting off the genitals of the wounded man. Only the ordered attack of the 6th Company prevented further mutilations.

Facts:

2 of the wounded, with their skulls crushed, were killed; 3 of the wounded were most seriously wounded with bayonet wounds. All the others had received heavy blows from the butts. **Since** the company had to continue the advance immediately, Lieutenant A. B. of the 6th Company was ordered to take over the protection of the wounded with three groups. seen

gez. Tratzki, Sergeant signed Hundwieser

First lieutenant and company commander

Protocol

Berlin, February 5, 1942

Personal details: My name is Peter Klick, I am 21 years old, a private, 3rd / Pioneer Battalion ...

To the point: on June 24, 1941, my 3rd Company was assigned to an infantry regiment in the attack. The attack took place in the Suraz area,

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west of Bialystok, behind the Narew. Since the superiority of the Russians was too great, we had to go back, leaving behind twelve wounded. These wounded belonged to the other assault troops, but not to my engineer company. The next day, when we went forward with reinforcements to the attack, we came to the same place where we had left the wounded. These had been mutilated and murdered by the Russians in the most horrible manner. One of them had been nailed to a tree in such a way that his arms were wrapped around it and nails driven through. His eyes had been gouged out and his tongue cut off. In addition, a German sidearm was stuck in his chest. Some of the other comrades also had their eyes gouged out and their tongues and genitals cut off. One of them also had a sidearm stuck in his chest. A small number of them had also been shot in the neck.

v. g. u.

gez. Peter Klick

The witness takes the oath.

gez. Dr. Schönegez. Aust

Protocol

Location, March 17, 1942

My name is Adalbert Podzelny, born on May 8, 1916 in Rotthausen near Gelsenkirchen, single, profession: baker and confectioner, living in Wuppertal-Barmen, private with the 4th Panzer Division..., currently in the reserve hospital...

To the point: On Wednesday, June 25, in the afternoon, I moved into Erzwilke with the 2nd Company of my tank regiment ... entered Erzwilke. Our company was given the task of securing the road from Erzwilke in the direction of Ro-sinny. To the right of the Erzwilke-Rosinny road was a wooded area. From this wooded area pioneers belonging to us had been ambushed in the afternoon. A Kradmelder had rescued himself from this pioneer platoon, most of whom had fallen. He had reported to our commander that the forest was occupied by enemy troops who attacked our troops on the way. The Kradmelder had also reported that the Kuschel area in particular should be searched because there were dead men there.

Our company was therefore ordered to clear the forest as far as it was possible until nightfall. We were ordered to the-

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We were divided into individual groups for this purpose. I joined the group consisting of the company commander, First Lieutenant Zerny, Sergeant Langheinrich, Corporal TurlaA and Private Sommer. To the right and left we were leaning against neighboring groups of our company, which in detail had the same strength as we had. On the terrain in front of us, which had to be cleaned up, was Hochwald. To the left of Hochwald was the KusAel compound. I went with the aforementioned four superiors or comrades into this KusAelgelände.

In a clearing, which had only heather, and whose size in the quadrangle was, according to my memory, at most 4 by 4 meters, the following picture presented itself to us:

Fifteen comrades lay completely naked, partly on the floor, partly on top of each other. They were all dead. Death must have occurred about 4 to 5 hours before our arrival. The doctor found shortly afterwards that thin blood clots were still visible in some of them. I know this because Sergeant Langheinrich and Corporal Turlach told me this afterwards.

Of the fifteen comrades, ten comrades each had a bayonet stuck in their throat. Of these ten comrades, six comrades had their bayonets stuck in their necks, with their faces partly upwards and partly sideways, impaled in the ground. The remaining four comrades still had their bayonets stuck in their necks, but were no longer impaled in the ground. Whether these four broke away from the ground in their death throes and stood up again with the bayonet in their necks cannot be determined with certainty, but it is possible. In about six comrades the genitals including the testicles were cut away ... According to my recollection, the ears and tongues of all 15 comrades - at least, however, of almost all comrades - had been cut out. ... [The gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced].

Head shots were present in about five or six comrades, according to my recollection. Since not all of the dead were shot in the head, it can be assumed with certainty that those who were not shot in the head died in an agonizing manner, presumably as a result of bayonet wounds to the neck. Some corpses lay stretched out, others curled into each other with fingernails clawed into the ground, which suggests particularly violent agonies of death.

The individual sheets of the pay books lay scattered on the ground within a radius of about 15 meters from the clearing. So were individual black skirts and pants. We recognized the bodies except for perhaps three men. Based on this recognition, we knew that they were undoubtedly members of our tank regiment.... were involved. We received the order to -72-

to leave the bodies until the doctor could arrive. Some people were left with the bodies as guards.

v. g. u.

gez. Podzelny, Private

The witness takes the oath.

g. w. u.

gez. Möller Field War Court Councillor

Message

Division command post, July 11, 1941

Subject: Shooting of German soldiers in Russian captivity

To the

Army High Command ... - Dept. I c

Enclosed is a report of the Artillery Regiment ... of July 10, 1941, together with the transcripts of the interrogation of Sergeant Röhrig and the non-commissioned officers Johannes Flux and Wilhelm Jany.

On 28.6. 1941 about 50 soldiers of the 2nd battery of the... Artillery Regiment, after defending themselves to the utmost, many of them also wounded, fell into Russian captivity when the Russians broke through the German position. The Russian soldiers of all ranks, including officers and political commissars, immediately set about taking all the prisoners' belongings, especially rings (even wedding and engagement rings), watches, and money. They also shoot the prisoners immediately, but this was allegedly prevented by the arrival of a Russian Major General (Sutchi?) When the German prisoners had to line up for transport, one of the Russian soldiers guarding them shot a non-commissioned officer of the 5th Battery in the foot at point-blank range. The Germans' request for medical treatment for their comrades, some of whom were seriously wounded, and to be allowed to carry them on a wagon was refused. In agreement with the Russians, the German prisoners laid down a wounded comrade under a tree after carrying him several kilometers, after the Russians had assured them that nothing would happen to the wounded man. The German prisoners had hardly left their comrade when the wounded man was put down with three shots by a Russian political commissar. At that time the Russian troops were not in combat with any German units.

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Only later, and during the afternoon, the Russians were fired upon during a halt by a German Pak gun and machine gun fire. The Russian soldiers immediately fled into the woods, shooting at the prisoners they had taken. As a result, six German prisoners were killed. After the Pak gun ceased firing, and German machine gun fire was no longer heard, the Russians returned to the German prisoners they had taken and threw several hand grenades at them, again killing or wounding five of their comrades. They also fired again at the prisoners with carbines at point-blank range, targeting the ranks below them. Two non-commissioned officers were killed, among them Sergeant D., who, when questioned, admitted that he had belonged to the Hitler Youth and had fought as a German in Spain.

For the Division Command:

the I. General Staff Officer a. B, gez. Musmans First Lieutenant

Protocol

Location, 10 Sept. 1942

My name is Heinz Jurack, I am 32 years old, of Protestant faith, (rank - profession) Obergefreiter, Infanterie-Ersatz-Bataillon ... (bookbinder master. Troop unit, place of residence).... deny the remaining credibility questions.

I declare on the subject of my interrogation:

7.ur Sache: On 28 June 1941, the I Battalion/Infantry Regiment.... (mot) was deployed near Dünaburg. I belonged to the 4th Company of the I Battalion. We had already crossed the Düna River and were in heavy combat with the Russians at Kockiny (village). The 4th Company had been distributed to the Rifle Company. I was deployed with my grenade launcher group with the 3rd Company. We were in a sand pit about 20 meters in diameter and were defending it against a superior force of the enemy. About 50 men were in position in this sand pit. In the course of the battle most of them were wounded. When the pressure of the enemy became so strong towards evening that we could no longer hold the position, we were ordered to clear the sand pit. While we were retreating, another part of the machine gun and grenade launcher operators was wounded, so that finally these weapons had to be left behind as well. Above all, we had to leave all the wounded in the sand pit.

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let. When I left the sand pit around 8 p.m. with the rest of the unwounded comrades, there were about 30 wounded lying there. These were all still alive. They were all essentially only slightly wounded, at least not

fatally, but in such a way that they could not go back with us. They had mainly leg shots and shots in the body, which prevented them from moving. The wounded with arm shots we took with us. We also had to leave the comrades who were wounded on the return march. When we regrouped about 3 km back, only about 10 to 15 men remained of the defenders of the aforementioned sand pit.

That same evening, the cleared position was retaken by the 3rd Battalion with tank support.

On the morning of the next day, June 29, 1941, early about 4 o'clock, I went forward to the old position with another 9 men under the leadership of our company commander, Lieutenant P., who had fallen in the meantime, to get the heavy weapons that had been left behind. When we got to the sand pit where we had left the wounded the night before, we found that none of them were alive. I looked closely at and examined all the wounded and found the following: All of the wounded left behind the day before had had their skulls bashed in. The skulls of all of them had been beaten flat. The blow had always been struck on the part of the skull that was turned upward. The blows must have been delivered with blunt objects, probably rifle butts or boot heels, because no sharp-edged wounds were seen on the heads. Of these people lying there with their heads bashed in, about 10 men had their own rare rifle stuck in their bodies. They had been pinned to the ground with the sidearm. Some had the sidearm stuck in the middle of the chest up to the handle, others also had the sidearm stuck in the eye up to the handle. We also found the wounded, who had been wounded during the retreat from the position on the way to the rear and had to be left behind, with their skulls bashed in.

Already on the advance to the position early on June 28, 1941, when we occupied the sand pit, I passed a group of wounded lying on the road and in the field next to it. There were a lieutenant and eleven men from the regiment's Kradschützenzug.... Without exception, their skulls had also been crushed. We examined them and found that they had only been shot before, so in my opinion they must still have been alive. They were just immobilized. They were the top group of the reconnaissance division. These had been wounded by the Russians, then beaten to death, and remained lying there until we

-75- came behind and occupied the position I spoke of earlier.

I have seen these incidents with my own eyes. At that time I made up my mind never to fall alive into Russian hands. None of the comrades with whom I went forward early on 29 June and who were also eyewitnesses to these events is still alive. They all fell later. I assure that the above statements are true, and I am prepared to swear to my testimony.

v. g. u.

Heinz Jurack

The witness took the oath.

Closed

gez. Dr. Hertelgez. Schneider

On June 27, 1941, the workshop group of a tank division occupied a plot of land in the northern part of Luck, about 100 meters from the left side of the market square.

In the morning at 6 o'clock a Ukrainian came and informed the war administrators Merz and Brüggmann that on the property the NKVD had murdered German prisoners of war. Immediate investigations revealed the gruesome discovery of bodies of four German airmen - a first lieutenant, a lieutenant, and two soldiers. Only in the case of the lieutenant were papers to be found showing that the unfortunate victim was a Lieutenant E. S., born in Passau in 1910. Obviously it was a shot down airplane crew.

In the further course of the Eastern campaign, it turned out that the Soviets murdered almost all the German airmen who had made a forced landing.

In this case, War Administrator Brüggmann was questioned by the division's court officer, Lieutenant Schönfelder.

Interrogation

Local accommodation, June 28, 1941

Personal details: My name is Hans Herbert Brüggmann, I am 41 years old, a Protestant, and have been back in the Wehrmacht since January 3, 1940.

To the point: The first corpse was without feet. In my opinion, these were chopped off. I came to this opinion because the bones of the lower leg protruded several centimeters from the flesh. I found one foot still stuck in the shoe. The body had burns about the size of a 5-mark piece.

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Another body showed wedge-shaped burns about 4 centimeters deep on both the chest and the back of the torso. I assumed that they were caused by a pointed object. A soldering iron found later gives rise to the assumption that these burns were made with these.

Another body had a burn ring about 6 to 7 centimeters wide on the left foot above the ankle, around the lower leg. The genital was preserved, the testicle was completely crushed.

The fourth body was completely unclothed and absolutely mutilated. A lower leg was missing, which was later found in the grave. A deep wound the size of a dinner plate was visible on the right side of the abdomen. I did not notice any burns on this corpse.

All the corpses had a strong odor of decomposition. I am not able to give any information about the time of death. The bodies were buried no more than one meter deep. The soil had only been lightly mounded.

gez. Brüggmann

Protocol

Location, June 17, 1942

My name is Otto Hufnagel, I am 24 years old, single, First Lieutenant, 3rd /A.-R...., currently reserve hospital...

To the point: At the end of June 1941 the ...Panzer Division had advanced on the tarmac (towards Tarnopol) after crossing the border from Busk. On the march I saw infantrymen of a German infantry company cut down by Russians next to the road, namely about 80 men, including three officers. The corpses were badly mutilated. Individual soldiers had their eyes gouged out, their ears cut off, others had their noses torn off or their skulls smashed in. Individual soldiers also had their genitals cut off. [The dead belonged to an infantry division. We had no time to make further observations.

At the beginning of October 1941, near Rylsk (near Kursk), I saw twelve members of a rifle division lying with severe mutilations, who had apparently lost their way and had fallen into the Russian lines. Individual soldiers had their skulls smashed in or their eyes gouged out.

v. g. u.

gez. Hufnagel

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmann

gez. D. R. K. nurse helper

Else Bohr

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Protocol

Berlin, January 26, 1942

My name is Klaus Henninger, I am 20 years old, single, tank destroyer, 1. Panzer-Jäger-Abteilung..., currently reserve hospital, Berlin-Dah-lem.

To the point: Two or three days after the fall of Bialystok, a platoon of the 3rd Company of our tank destroyer

division, which formed the advance section during the advance, was ambushed by the Russians near Suprasi. The platoon had just passed a bridge when it was violently attacked from both flanks from the woods extending after the bridge on both sides of the road and was temporarily cut off from the rest of our division. When -we later arrived at the scene of this battle, we found that about twenty men of the top platoon of the Third Company lay dead on the battlefield: the majority of these people were mutilated beyond recognition, so that it was only possible for comrades who knew the individual dead more closely to recognize them. Some of the dead had their eyes gouged out, others had their genitals cut off. Still others were missing fingers. I particularly remember that the Russians put a sidearm through one of my comrades, whom I knew well.... [the gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced].

v. g. u.

gez. Henninger, tank destroyer

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmanngez. Heinz Apitz, Sanitäts-Uffz.

Protocol

In the field, July 1, 1941

My name is Kurt Schäfer, born on May 3, 1920 in Dägerschlag. I have been a soldier only since October 3, 1940.

To the point: while going back from Klewan to Broniki we were captured by a Russian superior force that had bypassed us. We were driven from all selten to the road. I saw my comrades taking off their paddock. I wanted to take mine off too, but it got caught on the hook at the back. Immediately a Russian came up to me and yanked it around. Then we had to take off our hock, shirt, boots and stockings. The Russians ordered us to do this with appropriate hand movements. To my knowledge none of them spoke German. They were mainly young people. Those who did not take off their shirts immediately were roughly maltreated. For example, I saw one of them get a rib thrust with the butt of a rifle. Others were stabbed. I did not see this myself

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but then saw the wounds that were bleeding. I saw a Russian hit a wounded man lying on the ground on the head with the butt of his rifle. One always saw a Russian with a wounded man. These were screaming. We were now herded into the field, and then twenty men had their hands tied behind their backs. Why this happened I do not know. Then they were slammed together with rifle, pistol and machine guns. At the same moment, other Russians standing around us began to shoot at us, who were standing separately from the 20 who were tied up. As the first ones fell down, I jumped through between two Russians towards the cornfield 3 meters away and escaped through it. A number of other comrades also jumped away. Behind us they were shooting. On the way I did not meet any more Russians. After 6 km we came across people from the Kradschützenbataillon.

v. g. u.

gez. Dr. Heinrich gez. Kurt Schäfergez. Döss

Report

about the visit of the crime scene on the height west Broniki

Division command post, July 2, 1941

At about 1 p.m. I went to the place where soldiers of the 2nd Battalion Infantry Regiment..., having been captured, were shot by the Russians yesterday. I raised the following facts: I. On the western part of the road and

in the western ditch, over a distance of about 200 meters, there were 34 dead soldiers, including an officer. The dead were clothed and in possession of their full equipment. Details regarding injuries were not determined. These are probably the soldiers who fell wounded into the hands of the Russians and, according to the witnesses, were immediately shot or stabbed by them. Spread all over the road and especially eastward of the road were found countless pieces of equipment and clothing of German soldiers, also numerous carbines and sidearms, but not machine guns and sub

II. About 60 meters east of the road, in a clover field perpendicular to the road, a group of 26 bodies lying in a jumble. All corpses had their torsos exposed. Most of them wore only their pants as clothing, some of them still had boots on. All of them had numerous bullet wounds on the upper part of their bodies, and some of them also had the top of their skulls smashed with brain injuries.

III. About 50 meters eastward on the same clover field another group

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of 16 corpses, dressed in shirt and trousers, without boots, some without stockings, gunshot wounds as with II.

IV. About 50 meters north of the group under No. III 19 corpses with torsos also unclothed and numerous bullet wounds. They were, with the exception of three, bound by tying their hands behind their backs.

V. About 40 meters eastward of the group just described, one of 19 dead men dressed in shirts and pants, some with boots.

VI. South of the clover field just described, there were twelve dead bodies scattered singly in the tall corn, and in an adjoining potato field another two not far from the road.

VII. In the eastward ditch there were again ten dead men in full equipment. One of them wore a head bandage with a strong blood supply and probably fell wounded into the hands of the Russians; some of them may have been killed in action. Exact determinations about the time of death could not be made.

VIII. About 20 meters west of the road also four men in full equipment.

IX. About 80 to 100 meters west of the road in a field two officers and a man. One of the officers, a first lieutenant, was lying with his face on the ground, dressed in trousers, shirt and boots. The front half of his face was unrecognizable because the entire front of his head had been smashed by spade or butt blows. The first lieutenant also had a bullet hole in his back. The other officer, a lieutenant, had a severe gunshot wound to the head. Somewhat apart from this group was found another dead man, a private, still dressed in his shirt and trousers.

X. About 10 meters west of the road, 60 meters south of the group described in No. I, seven dead, including one officer, all clothed, some still wearing equipment.

One of them must have been badly wounded, he had a bandage on his left upper arm that was badly bleeding.

It is possible that in addition to these 153 bodies that I have identified, other bodies will be found during further troop searches that were in preparation.

gez. Dr. Heinrich, Councilor of War

Protocol

Location, June 18, 1942

My name is Rudi Ebert, I am 26 years old, single, sergeant. 12./Infanterie-Regiment..., at the moment reserve hospital...

To the point: Around 1. July 1941 our 2nd Battalion had to join the

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Fighting in the Rokitno marshes, when the Russians attacked with superior numbers from an ambush, they withdrew, leaving the more seriously wounded in place. The next day my battalion, together with the 2nd Battalion, made a counterattack and threw the Russians back again. When we came back to the place where the wounded of the 2nd Battalion had been left the day before, all our comrades were dead. I saw about 20 to 30 corpses lying there. The uniforms of our comrades were burned,^A and some of the bodies were burned as well. The picture that presented itself to us left no doubt that the bodies of the comrades from the 2nd Battalion had been doused with fuel and then set on fire. The Russians also set fire to the wounded comrades who had fallen into Russian captivity. In some cases there were also charred pieces of wood in the wounds of our comrades. The Russians had thus driven wooden stakes into the wounds. Among the corpses I recognized that of Lieutenant P., who was more closely known to me. Some of the corpses had been so battered by the Russians that it was impossible for the men of the 2nd Battalion to identify their own comrades.

v. g. u.

gez. Rudi Ebert

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmanngez. Sigird Müller

Protocol

Location, June 17, 1942

Personal details: My name is Willi Kemper, I am 26 years old, single, non-commissioned officer 13th / Infantry Regiment..., currently reserve hospital...

To the point: At the beginning of July 1941, my division, the... Division advanced at the Kesselschlacht of Bialystok. The top was formed by the infantry regiment ... One night the second battalion of this regiment, which was marching in the lead, was attacked by surprise by motorized Russian troops and suffered considerable losses as a result. During the night our regiment was ordered to counterattack. In this process we also came to the place of the attack. I saw about 15 to 20 German soldiers, who had no bullet wounds, lying there murdered. They were badly mauled. Some of them had their skulls crushed. Some of them also had their faces smashed in. At the funeral the following day I took another close look at these corpses. Here, too, I found that the corpses had no bullet wounds whatsoever. After the operation our division marched back a distance to the advance road. On this way we came across during a rest in the forest area next to the road -81-.

on the corpses of two non-commissioned officers. The two bodies were tied together with a gas mask ribbon. The two soldiers had been strangled with this band. Apart from that, the corpses did not show any injuries, especially no gunshot wounds.

At the end of July 1941, our 11th Company, which was on the march from the advance unit to the regiment, was ambushed by Russian troops at Sosch (about 80 km south of Smolensk) in the evening in confusing forest terrain. Our 11th Company suffered a total of 68 men casualties in this raid. Of these, about eleven men were killed as a result of gunshot wounds. All the others had either no or no fatal gunshot wounds, but were brutally murdered by the Russians when they surrendered to the attacking Russians after their ammunition ran out. Almost all of the comrades had their skulls bashed in by the Russians. Individual soldiers had the Soviet star drawn on their chests with bayonet wounds. Other comrades had their ears cut off or their eyes gouged out.

f. g. u. gez.

Willi Kemper

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmanngez. D. R. K. nurse's aide Else Bohr

Protocol

Division Staff Headquarters, July 9, 1941.

By order, Dr. Erich Koch, assistant physician and departmental physician, born in Dillenburg (Hesse-Nassau) on September 13, 1906, appears and, after recalling the truth and being instructed on the meaning of the oath, states:

Shortly before Brzezany on 3. 7.1941 the Russians were on the retreat. The reconnaissance division... had been ordered to protect the right flank of the division. During the execution of this order our I. Schwadron came into direct contact with the enemy. The squadron was partially cut off by the Russians. In the whole of this enterprise 17 members of the same squadron fell. Of these 17, six were found in a badly mutilated condition. In detail, these six casualties had the following injuries:

Two fallen men had their hands tied behind their backs. One had his right eye gouged out and his face smashed with blunt force, probably with a rifle butt. The second had his tongue cut out and his neck cut off at the level of the larynx.

The other four were also mutilated. One of them had his right hand and elbow chopped off in such a way that the hand and forearm -82- were only hanging from individual parts of the skin. Another had his right arm pierced several times with a sidearm or other stabbing weapon. The arm looked like a sieve. Another two soldiers had stab wounds all over their bodies that had been inflicted with a sidearm. All six of the mutilated soldiers had also been completely looted, and some of them were even missing their soldier's book and dog tags. The two bound soldiers fell unwounded into the hands of the enemy. The other four soldiers had obviously been wounded before the mutilation, one of them had already been bandaged by our people.

The witness is therefore legally sworn and confirms under oath the above statements.

f. g. u. gez.

Dr. Erich Koch

Closed:

gez. Dr. Pranger, Army Judge

Protocol

Berlin, January 26, 1942

Personal details: My name is Heinz Schröter, I am 18 years old, 3rd / ...

To the point: In early July 1941, parts of my battalion were deployed between Rovno and Ostrog to retake a village that had previously been occupied by an Army bicycle squadron. In the village itself we found about 80 members of the bicycle squadron dead. I myself saw 15 to 20 men. Five of them were lying in a horse stable, the others in the streets and ditches of the village. Some of the dead soldiers of the bicycle squadron I saw had their eyes gouged out, their ears and genitals cut off, and some had their stomachs slit open. In some of them several mutilations had been done at the same time. Most of the dead had only underpants and shirts on. In any case, they were inadequately clothed. As we have heard from two surviving non-commissioned officers of the squadron, the squadron was attacked at night.

f. g. u. gez.

Heinz Schröter

The witness takes the oath.

gez. Dr. Schönegez. Stutzke

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Protocol

Location, June 18, 1942

My name is Jakob Deigentasch, I am 22 years old, single, private, 10th Infantry Regiment... at the moment reserve hospital...

To the point: On about July 5, 1941, my regiment was ordered to relieve the First Regiment of the...Infantry Division. At that time we were located south of Smolensk. The outpost of the first regiment had taken up position in a village. It was under the command of a sergeant. It also had 6 men. Since the Russians had broken through, this outpost could not be relieved by our regiment as had been planned. When we reached the house where the outpost of the 1. Regiment had established itself the next day, we found all 7 men dead. The sergeant and another German soldier had been thrown headlong into a pit about the height of a man near the house. The other five bodies lay in the yard in front of the house. I looked at them closely and found that all of them had both hands chopped off. Furthermore, the noses and ears of these comrades had been cut off. The corpses were so battered that it was completely impossible to recognize them.

l. g. u. gez. Jakob Deigentasch The witness was sworn.

signed Dr. Hofmann signed Sigird Müller

Protocol

Division command post, July 8, 1941

There appear the following named clergymen of the ... Infantry Division and declare after taking oath:

My name is Simon Sindensberger, I am 45 years old. War chaplain with the ... Infantry Division.

To the point: In July 1941, my colleague Klinger and I searched for and buried fallen Wehrmacht members of the ... Infantry Division and buried them. In the area around Porzecze we found the following atrocities committed by the Bolsheviks against German Wehrmacht members:

We found Lieutenant S. of the Field Replacement Battalion..., whose legs were completely charred to the abdomen. There were still remnants of boots and flesh. 5 to 6 other Wehrmacht members were charred beyond recognition and could not be identified. The Russians must have doused the wounded or fallen with fuel and set them on fire. In the case of Lieutenant S. we could not find any bullet wounds on the remaining body parts. Such findings were not possible with the other casualties.

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Sergeant P. of the infantry regiment ... was found with his skull crushed. He must have been wounded before. Somewhat aside hung in the bushes an unrolled bandage package, so that it can be assumed that he tried to bandage himself and was killed by the Russians.

A medic with a Red Cross armband was also lying there with his skull bashed in.

In another place the bodies of the following Wehrmacht members were found:

1. Senior physician Dr. A., Staff ... Infantry Division
2. Resident Dr. H., Field Replacement Battalion ...
3. Sergeant K., Field Gendarmerie Squad....
4. Motorist P., 2nd ambulance platoon ...
5. Private K., 2nd Ambulance Platoon ...
6. Corporal L., from a medical unit.

The fallen were lying in a row on their faces, except for Sergeant K., who was lying about 1 m away. From this it is clear that the fallen had fallen into Russian captivity and had been shot in the back. In particular, Senior Physician Dr. A. had received one shot in the right shoulder and two shots in the hip, Sergeant K. had received three shots in the neck. The other fallen had been shot in the hip and back. It should be emphasized that Senior Physician Dr. A. was wearing the Red Cross armband. These six fallen were not deprived.

On the other hand, in the case of other fallen, such as Lieutenant W., Staff ... Infanterie-Division, Private R., Unterstab ... Infanterie-Division and others were found to have been robbed of their boots. Some of the dead also

had their pockets emptied.

v.g.

My name is Erich Klinger, I am 34 years old, a military chaplain with the 161st Infantry Division.

To the matter: The statement of the war pastor Sindersonberger of 8. 7. 41 has been held against me. It is correct. I will make it the subject of my interrogation.

v. g.

The witnesses Sindersonberger and Klinger were then sworn in.

Closed:

gez. von Müllmann, Stabgez. Schmitz, Private

gez. Sindersonberger, war priest

gez. Klinger, military pastor

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Protocol

Local accommodation, October 30, 1941

My name is Rudolf Zaborowski, I was born on June 26, 1916 in Schanzenort, district Ebenrode/East Prussia, single, Protestant, not punished.

On July 29, 1941, my battery was located in the town of Are in Estonia. In the morning of this day at 6 a.m. a shock troop enterprise was ordered, to which from my battery besides me the lieutenant F. and the radio operator S. were commanded. The entire assault party rode on bicycles from Are in the direction of the village of Jaagupi. While we were riding, we suddenly received surprise machine-gun fire and fire from Pak guns. We immediately jumped into the trenches next to the road. While all my comrades had suffered immediate wounds, I was the only one who was initially unwounded. I therefore tried to take cover on the side in the woods lying there. When I had taken a few steps, I received a shot in the back of my right knee and consequently fell to the ground. The shot must, I suppose, have come from a Pak gun, for the leg was completely shattered, and the lower leg was left hanging from the thigh with only a few scraps of flesh. About three meters away from me lay an infantryman whose name I do not know. Both of his legs had been shot off and he was moaning and wailing in pain. I shouted to him to be quiet, because the Russians were coming. Immediately after that, 30 to 40 Russian soldiers approached us. In my opinion, they were all women. They had uniforms on and also carried rifles with bayonets. I could tell that they were women by the fact that they had long hair coming out from under their caps. They also had fuller chests. To which formation they belonged I do not know. Before they got to me, I had dipped my hand in my blood and smeared my face with it, because I wanted to play dead. I did that and closed my eyes. Only now and then I opened them a little and could therefore observe what was happening around me. First, several of these female soldiers came up to me and kicked me in the stomach and in the face with their boots. They also tried to bend my fingers backwards, but without breaking them. Then they searched my bag, turning me around as well. They took away my soldier's book, which contained 60 RM in paper money, and my belt, which contained my pistol, sidearm, map case, haversack and bottle. The Russian soldiers did not maltreat me any further, obviously because they thought I was dead. On the other hand, I could observe that they approached the infantryman I mentioned earlier, who was lying three meters in front of me, still alive and screaming and wailing.

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First, he received a stab in the neck with the bayonet while he was lying on the ground on his back. Then I saw one of the soldiers' wives take a curved knife to about the level of his breastbone and slit his body with a cut after she had opened his blouse. Whether his entrails came out on it, I did not see. Whether he was still alive at that moment I do not know. He only made a gasping sound when he was stabbed in the throat and was silent afterwards. The Russian soldiers stayed with us intermittently from 7 to 11 o'clock. When they had withdrawn, I

dragged myself into a nearby forest and was found in the evening by ambulance crews and brought back.

v. g. u.

signed Rudolf Zaborowski, Sergeant

The witness was then sworn in.

gez. Milthalergez. Palm, Sergeant

Protocol

Berlin, February 3, 1942

Personal details: My name is Willi Nüsse, I am 25 years old, single, non-commissioned officer of the 9th /Infantry Regiment..., currently reserve military hospital...

To the matter: At the end of July 1941 the head of our marching column, in which my regiment was marching, was ambushed by the Russians in the area of Vitebsk, who attacked and surrounded the head of our column from both sides of the road from the flank. In the process, as I was later able to ascertain for myself on the spot, a large number of members of the 1st and 2nd Infantry Regiments fell....

Later exact recounting revealed 81 fallen from the 1. Company and 53 fallen from the 2. Company. I examined most of the corpses and found that many of the fallen comrades had been bound by their hands with their own belts. The corpses showed stab wounds throughout and the majority were severely mutilated.

Today I can no longer remember every detail. But I do remember for certain that Lieutenant V. of the 3rd Infantry Regiment.... had both eyes gouged out, and that a medical grade had received several bayonet wounds in the abdomen. In addition, this medical grade also had both eyes gouged out and the back of his head bashed in.

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At the end of November 1941 we were in a field position about 30 km east of Staritsa (near Kalinin). A supply wagon of the I./Infantry Regiment... was ambushed by Russians in this area. In the process, the driver was shot and the accompanying sergeant was stripped completely naked and murdered. He was found in this condition by members of the I./Infantry Regiment.... He was found in this condition. Later, in the village of Martinovo, where we were in position, I saw the corpse of this sergeant and found that he had a stab wound in the neck and another stab wound in the stomach area

The body did not show any gunshot wounds.

v. g. u.

gez. Nüsse, Willi

Sergeant The witness was sworn.

gez. Dr. Hofmann

gez. Margot Behnke

Protocol

Location, June 29, 1942

Personal details: My name is Rudolf Schneider, 23 years old, private, Staff I./ Infantry Regiment...

To the point: On August 6, 1941, near the village of Kozaky, on the highway from Smolensk to Moscow, about 70 km east of Smolensk, we found 25 members of the advance division of the ... Infantry Division were found murdered. This advance division has fallen into Russian captivity except for one Pak gun. Among the 25 men were four to five officers. All 25 had been hung from trees about 500 meters to the right of the runway (looking toward Moscow) within a radius of about 15 to 25 meters. All of them were hanging upside down with their heads at about shoulder height. All officers had both eyes gouged out and both hands cut off or chopped off. One could clearly see that the eyes had been gouged out. The heads were otherwise unharmed, only the eye sockets were bloodied. In the case of the remaining people, either the eyes had been gouged out or the hands or fingers

had been cut off or chopped off. The Russians had removed the boots of all those murdered. Badges and insignia had been torn off and pockets looted. The attack on this advance party took place on the night of August 6.

v. g. u.

signed Rudolf Schneider, Private

The witness takes the oath.

gez. Dr. Schönegez. Kunisch

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Protocol

Location, February 10, 1942

Personal information: My name is Karl Zernia, I am 32 years old, single, sergeant, 9th/Infantry Regiment... at the moment reserve hospital...

To the point: At the beginning of August 1941 my regiment was deployed in the cauldron around Uman. We were located about 20 km north of Pervomaisk. The I Battalion was ambushed by strong Russian forces and suffered heavy losses. When we tried to establish communication with the regimental command post, we passed the position of the I Battalion. On a railroad embankment lay about 30 to 40 corpses of comrades of the I./Infantry Regiment.... I took a closer look at individual corpses. Some comrades had both eyes gouged out, all corpses showed almost uniform stab wounds in the face, some corpses were mutilated beyond recognition.

In September 1941, during the Kiev battle, we came to a village where, while searching the houses, we found in a barn, hidden under straw, the bodies of a lieutenant and four German soldiers. All five comrades had their throats cut. There were no other injuries, especially bullet wounds, so that I, together with my comrades, was convinced that these five German soldiers had fallen into Russian captivity and had then been cattle-murdered. These five soldiers were buried by my regiment at the same place.

v. g. u.

gez. Karl Zernia, Sergeant

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmanngez. Ruth Frenzel

Protocol

Location, September 8, 1942

Personal details: My name is Franz Lörner, I am 24 years old, single, non-commissioned officer, 10./infantry regiment..., to tent reserve hospital...

To the point: on August 10, 1941, a reinforced platoon of the III Battalion Infantry Regiment... conducted a forcible reconnaissance of the foothills near the village of Rekta (near Rogachev). This assault party was cut off by the Russians and suffered heavy losses. Only three men managed to make their way back to the German lines. The other comrades were either killed in action or wounded and became Russian prisoners. In the morning of August 12, 1941, we captured the village of Rekta and found there, in front of the village, the bodies of about 25

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Members of our battalion. Almost all of the dead belonged to our 11th Company. Most of the corpses had their stomachs slit open. About 7 to 8 comrades had their necks cut. I took a particularly close look at the corpse of Corporal H. of the 11th, since he was a good friend of mine. The corpse of H. did not show any bullet wounds. On the other hand, he had a gaping stab wound on his abdomen. In the area of the wound, the clothing and uniform pieces were heavily bled. In some of the other casualties I found bullet wounds in addition to the stab wounds.

On October 10, 1941, I was wounded in the left forearm and on October 19, 1941, I was sent to the war hospital in Kaluga. On November 2, 1941, a large number of wounded (about 120 men), who were accommodated in this hospital, were loaded onto two omnibuses and a truck to be taken further back. The lighter wounded who could sit were loaded into the omnibuses, while the wounded who had to be transported on stretchers were placed on the truck. In my estimate, the two omnibuses accommodated about 100 wounded. The omnibuses left about half an hour before the truck. I was placed on a stretcher on the truck. When we got on the tarmac, we ran into our two omnibuses about 15 kilometers behind Kaluga. These had been overturned and were still smoldering in the ditch. The omnibuses had obviously been attacked by scattered Russian units on the tarmac, overturned and then set on fire. All the wounded, as well as the drivers and accompanying medics, had been killed by the Russians. The picture that presented itself to us was such that some of the wounded apparently tried to flee after the attack. These comrades, however, were cut down by the Russians, as were the wounded who could not get out of the omnibuses. The latter were burned to death in the omnibuses. Many corpses had severe burns. The two omnibuses were clearly marked as ambulances by large Red Cross signs on both sides. When we had seen what fate had befallen the two omnibuses, our truck drove back to Kaluga.

v. g. u.

gez. Franz Lörner, Sergeant

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmann
gez. Irma Schmidt

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Protocol

Location, October 27, 1941

My name is Friedrich Meteling, born on July 20, 1910 in Hünxe, married, of Protestant faith.

To the point: On August 14, 1941, our veterinary company marched through the Russian village of Mogulovo, south of Smolensk, in the direction of Shiliv-ji. After we were about 700 meters behind the village, we suddenly received heavy fire. We went down from the wagons into cover. Some of my comrades, who were still able to grab their carbines in time, fired against the attacking Russians. While I was assisting a wounded comrade, I was shot in the upper right arm. Some of my comrades had fallen, others had taken cover in the rear due to the strong Russian superiority. Afterwards we were captured by the Russians. The Russians led us back to the area where our vehicles were. There they took away our watches, pocket knives, lighters and other items. Then we had to line up in two columns - there were about 15 to 20 of us left, including Sergeant K. and Sergeant J. Suddenly shots rang out. I instinctively dropped down. Two comrades who had been hit came to lie on top of me. Then the Russians kicked my comrades with their boots. Some of them had made screaming noises beforehand. I myself was also kicked in the back of the head. Since I pretended to be dead, the Russians then let go of me again. This whole process may have lasted about ten minutes. Finally a hand grenade was thrown at us. This injured me in the left arm. I received a shattering of the left elbow joint.

The other comrades gave no more sign of life.

In the meantime the German troops came forward. After about twenty minutes I was found by comrades. Among the comrades who were shot by the Russians there were also some from another unit. These had already been in Mogulowo before us.

v. g. u.

counted Meteling, lance corporal

The witness was sworn in accordance with the regulations.

gez. Dr. Brauns
gez. Emme rich

Protocol

Location, March 17, 1942

Personal details: My name is Unteroffizier Johann Reiser von I./Geb.Pi..., I am 27 years old.

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To the point: It may have been about the middle of August 1941, when my division was in action against Uman from Vinnitsa and took part in the great encirclement battle. The second platoon of the 2nd Company of my battalion, under the leadership of Lieutenant R., had the task of reconnaissance. This platoon was divided into two parts, the first of which was surrounded by the Russians, while the second managed to save itself. The next day my platoon was deployed to search for the wounded who had been left behind. A non-commissioned officer of the first division had escaped and reported that the remaining part of the division had been surrounded by the Russians. According to him, no one on the German side had fallen when he left. When we arrived at the place - it was an open place and road between corn and sunflower fields - we found the 22 comrades of the second platoon of the 2nd Company all murdered. Most of them had had their skulls bashed in with a blunt object. The others had obviously been shot in the head at close range. Those murdered in this way had fist-sized holes in their foreheads or temples. Lieutenant R. was lying on his back with a bandage around his chest. Above him lay a medical sergeant who still had the bandage in his hand. His skull had been bashed in.

f. g. u. gez.

Johann Reiser, sergeant

The witness took the oath.

gez. Dr. Schöne

gez. Draeger

Report

Location, September 5, 1941

Report on the tank attack on the main dressing station in Lysowka on September 2, 1941.

On August 25, the 1st Medical Company ... took over the Lysowka main dressing station as a replacement for the 2nd Medical Company, which had already been working there for 14 days without any special incidents. The 2nd Platoon of the Medical Company (Main Dressing Station Platoon) was deployed there. This platoon was led by my deputy, assistant physician Dr. Krautberger, while I was entrusted with deputizing for the sick company commander and worked as a surgeon at the main dressing station.

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The village of Lysovka is an elongated straight street village. In a house in the center of the village was located in the reception the dressing and operation room and the room of the medical officers. Behind the building the two wounded tents and part of the crew tents were pitched, while the wounded with major surgical operations had been housed in a neighboring house about 60 meters away. The parked ambulances of the first ambulance platoon, marked with painted red crosses and a Red Cross flag, were camouflaged on the road opposite the houses.

The main dressing station itself was clearly recognizable as a medical facility by two boards marked with the red cross and, above all, by a pole set up directly on the road and bearing the Red Cross flag.

In spite of the strong attack on the wounded, the main dressing station was also emptied on the eve of the attack, i.e. on September 1, as before, to the Baltutino field hospital. The last transport of the wounded took place at 11 p.m. with the ambulance of Private Hahn. During the night further admissions of wounded took place, so that in the operating room work continued until about 4:00 a.m.

At about 5:15 a.m., Private Meitzner, who had been assigned as an outpost, entered our sleeping room and woke me up with an excited shout that machine guns were being fired in the village. Assistant doctor Dr. Krautberger and I immediately got up and ran in front of the house. We heard rifle and machine gun fire explosions of larger projectiles from the entrance to the village, where a house was also. Suddenly I heard the call: "Russian tanks are driving into the village". I run to the wounded tent and give the order to immediately load the wounded and bring them to safety. Assistant doctor Dr. Krautberger and I immediately begin rescue help of the company members who have come running in the meantime I instructed the assistant doctor Dr. Hartke, who had joined us, to immediately contact the local commander, who lived about 200 meters away from us.

The rifle and machine gun fire immediately approached the main dressing station, mixed with now clear detonations of tank shells. The adjacent house with an ambulance parked there had also been set on fire by a hit. In the following minutes ambulances were brought in, wounded were loaded and driven away, while the enemy tanks took the main dressing station complex under heavy fire. Assistant doctor Dr. Krautberger ran into the street to fetch another ambulance from the opposite side, but this was no longer possible, since the first tank had already approached within about 40 meters.

had come and kept the road under heavy fire. These were 32-ton tanks, on each of which 5 to 6 infantrymen lay armed with rifles and hand grenades. The direct fire of these infantrymen on men of the main dressing station was now returned by some of our people by rifle shots.

At that second, two fully loaded ambulances were ready to leave. The wounded who had not yet been loaded were still being recovered in fragmentation trenches at the moment when the first tank turned the corner of the house and fired, and I ordered full cover. Everything was now trying to get to safety in different directions. I ran with some men in the direction of the local commandant's office to inquire about the situation there. There I was joined by assistant physician Dr. Krautberger, who in the meantime had been wounded in the right thigh by a shot. I also met Unterarzt Dr. Hartke and some other members of the company there. The tanks, which had rolled a few hundred meters through the village after the attack on the main dressing station, turned back again and kept the whole area under indiscriminate fire, so that I had to take cover with the comrades I had met in a nearby wood.

After the tanks had been rolled off, we returned to the main assembly area, where we were presented with a ghastly picture of blind destruction. A loaded truck of the company, marked by the red cross, which, as mentioned before, was already in the process of leaving, had been hit from behind by direct fire from the tank gun, injuring the wounded lying on it on stretchers so badly that three were killed immediately and the fourth died during transport to the field hospital. Not content with that, the tank had also rammed the car and pushed it up onto a truck standing next to it, trapping one dead man behind a rear wheel and the splintered body, while the other dead men and the severely wounded man lay around on the blood-streaked body with ghastly injuries. The driver of the car was lying next to his car with a cracked skull. It should be noted that on the wagon were also found fired bullets, so that it can be assumed that all the weapons available to the Russian tankers were used to shoot at the wounded wagon. Next to the ambulance there was a Russian rifle with a sidearm mounted on it. The second ambulance, which was ready to leave, could not leave because it would have collided with the tank coming around the corner of the house, but the tank had run over the engine with a caterpillar and completely smashed it. Our car standing next to this car was pressed against the wall of the house by the tank and crushed along its entire length. A crew tent was damaged by over-

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Another one was punctured by the Russian infantry lying on the tanks, some of whom had dismounted at the main dressing station, by stabbing them with the mounted sidearm. The wounded tents had been shot through several times and the rations for the wounded had been robbed from one. Next to one of the tents lay one of our medical service grades, who had helped us load the wounded until the end, killed by a bullet to the head. Behind the tent lay a lightly wounded man, who probably tried to bring himself to safety in the trench around the tent, also shot. Further, during the raid the Bolsheviks shot at wounded men who were clearly marked as such by bandages and who, in their fear, wanted to escape further from the splinter trenches in which they had been rescued. In addition, four more partly ambulance company trucks, partly ambulances were destroyed by ramming or setting fire to them. One of the drivers, who tried to escape to safety, was shot in the back and killed.

The main dressing station building itself, which was marked on the street side by a school board with the red cross fixed next to the entrance, not to mention a second board with the red cross and the Red Cross flag standing directly across the street, had also come under direct fire. Impacts could be seen in the house beams, and rifle and machine gun projectiles were lying around in the operating room and the medical officers' lounge.

After this terrible attack on the main dressing station, the severely wounded lying in the adjacent building and fortunately overlooked by the Russians, as well as the remaining wounded, of whom six were

were newly wounded by the raid, some of them very seriously, were transported away as quickly as possible, since a return of tanks had to be expected.

As already mentioned at the beginning, Private Hahn had been sent off with the last transport of wounded the day before at 11:00 p.m.. After the tank attack he arrived again in Lysowka and reported that after his departure about 1 km from the village a total of 5 shells had hit both sides of the car and in front of him. He thought it was enemy artillery fire and quickly drove on. On his way back the next morning, a shell struck behind his car at the same place before Lysowka, the muzzle flash of which he could perceive distantly in front of him. Since everything remained calm, he drove on towards the village. About 200 meters from the village he again noticed a muzzle flash in front of him, from which shell the rear of the car was cut across. This wagon was also clearly marked as a medical wagon by a waving Red Cross flag. Private Hahn also noticed at this moment the outlines of three Russian tanks standing next to the first houses at the entrance to the village.

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Women of the village shouted with their hands at the Russian soldiers standing next to the tanks, and Pvt. Hahn (he understands some Russian) heard that they wanted to make clear to the soldiers again and again that there was only a military hospital in the village and that they should not enter. The Russians, however, were not swayed, and two tanks started marching toward the village, while part of the crew of the third tank came toward his car. Hahn was able to get to safety in the cornfield while the Russians ransacked his car and, in response to a call, returned to their tank to follow the other two into the village (see enclosed interrogation of Private Hahn). This fact is confirmed by Private Plocharski (who is also able to communicate in Russian) in so far as village women told him about this incident after the raid (see interrogation of Private Plocharski).

From this factual report it is clear that the Bolsheviks, in grossest violation of the Geneva Agreement, without having been fired upon or attacked in any other way beforehand, deliberately attacked the main dressing station, which was clearly marked in every way and in all directions as a medical facility, from behind with weapons such as rifles, machine guns and tanks, and in a bestial manner murdered and destroyed helpless wounded, medical officers and medical material. The Russian tank men were informed by the village women that there was only a military hospital in the village, but the tanks nevertheless, or perhaps because of this, undertook the attack in the conviction that they could rob and murder here for once without encountering any military resistance.

And how do German medical facilities behave? We provide medical care to our wounded opponents just as we do to German soldiers. At the time of the attack, there was also a captured Soviet soldier in one of our wounded tents, whose life we had saved the day before by amputating his leg. Several other wounded Bolsheviks had also been treated by us in the last few days and taken away to the prisoners' hospital.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the courageous behavior of the main dressing station platoon, from which 11 men donated blood for seriously wounded comrades at the main dressing station in Lysowka alone. With the energetic support of the assistant doctor, Dr. Krautberger, and with the help of the sub-doctors, the sergeant-major, and the other men of the platoon and the ambulance platoon aware of the approaching and wildly firing tanks, worked in iron discipline until the first tank turned the corner of the house, firing, they succeeded in achieving so much in these barely 5 minutes. Three of our men

remained dead on the field, but by this act most of the 41 wounded lying on the main dressing station at that time were removed or otherwise brought to safety.

gez. Dr. Allmeling

Senior physician and deputy company commander

Senior physician Dr. Allmeling takes the oath as far as his own perceptions are concerned.

Signature

Court Martial Councilor

September 10, 1941

Protocol

Location, June 27, 1942

Personal details: My name is Otto Schippa, 24 years old, sergeant, 3./infantry regiment....

To the point: On October 14, 1941, I was a sergeant-major with the company's supply train, which was located in Bogdanowka. In the morning at about 11 o'clock, the supply train was to follow the company. In the process we had to pass through a wooded area and were ambushed there by the Russians. On this occasion we had to leave eight wounded comrades behind. When we returned to the same place about an hour later in the counterattack, we found the eight comrades murdered. Their faces had been mutilated beyond recognition by the Russians. Their eyes had been gouged out, their ears, nose and tongue cut off. Some of them still had stitches in their bodies. In addition, the Russians had completely plundered them.

In March 1942, about 30 km south of Vyazma, near the village of Gorby, a platoon of the first company of my regiment was wiped out by the Russians in a wooded area. There were 21 men in total. I saw these people the next day when they were buried. At least half of them had also been mutilated in the face. Their eyes had also been gouged out, their tongues, noses and ears cut off.

f. g. u. gez.

Otto Schippa, Sergeant

The witness took the oath of testimony. Dr. Schöne

gez. Wetli Schaffhaubt

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Protocol

Location, April 8, 1942

Personal details: My name is Bernhard Noky, I am 35 years old, 1./Flak ...

To the point: In mid-October 1941, I was ordered by Lieutenant E. of my battery on a reconnaissance trip in preparation for the battery's change of position. Lieutenant E. and two privates besides myself were driving in a bucket truck on the Pavlova - Gshatsk road, when we passed through an area overgrown with brushwood, we saw three German soldiers lying dead to the side of the road. Lieutenant E. got off the wagon and approached the dead. As could be seen from the emergency bandages they wore, they were wounded soldiers; two of them had their eyes gouged out, a third had his legs chopped off. One of the three also had his forearms cut off. Not far from this place there was a solitary homestead with smoke rising from its chimney. As we got closer, we saw some Russian soldiers fleeing from the homestead. Lieutenant E. and the two privates searched the house, while I took over fire protection with a light machine gun. They found three Russians hiding in a sort of cellar and captured them. In the living room of the house lay two wounded German soldiers with their eyes gouged out; the two were still alive but were on their last legs. We took the three captured Russians back to the troops and delivered them.

v. g. u.

signed Bernhard Noky, Private

The witness was sworn to his testimony in accordance with the regulations.

gez. Dr. Heinemanngez. Voige

Protocol

Berlin, February 13,
1942

Personal details: My name is Herbert Wagner, I am 21 years old, 5th / Infantry Regiment ...

To the point: Near Mologinow on October 18, 1941, two battalions of my regiment had advanced and entrenched themselves in the woods during the night. They were encircled by the Russians at night and had to retreat early in the morning. Since they had to cross open fields, they were particularly exposed to Russian fire and suffered heavy casualties. It was impossible to take the wounded with them.

After a few days a division, which had been called in to support us, advanced again; my regiment followed this division. We now found the wounded who had been left behind as corpses. All the corpses had been robbed; many had their ears cut off, others their au-

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We also found emasculations in the mouths of the children.

There were about 60 men, most of whom were mutilated. Probably even more comrades were mutilated, because many bodies had already been buried.

The wounded had bullet wounds that had apparently immobilized them. They must therefore have been mutilated by the Russians while still alive.

I saw the mutilated bodies myself.

v. g. u.

signed Herbert Wagner

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Richtergez. Sister Peregrina Redmann

Protocol

Local shelter, November 9, 1941

The staff physician Dr. Sachs appears, Kradschützen Battalion.... and, after pointing out the meaning of the oath, declares: My name is Rudolf Sachs, I was born on August 7, 1911 in Jößnitz near Flauen i. V., active medical officer, Protestant.

1. At the beginning of the Russian campaign I was battalion surgeon with the II Battalion Infantry Regiment (mot).... During the fighting for the bridgehead at Dzisna on the Düna River, on July 8, 1941, two platoons of the Z./Infantry Regiment (mot).... while combing through an obscure forest, were cut off and apparently surrounded. The company reported 1 officer, 8 NCOs, and 65 men missing that evening.

During the combing of the forest on July 9, 1941, which had the purpose of finding the missing persons, 61 missing persons were found dead. I went to the place where they were found. I looked at about 60 corpses. I was able to determine that they had been murdered either as wounded or as unwounded prisoners. Most of them had been killed by a typical shot in the neck, others by stabs with a sidearm into the chest and by butt blows to the face and skullcap. The bullet holes of the neck shots were largely surrounded by powder smoke, so that it could be determined without any doubt that they were close-range shots. In the case of one dead man, the face had been smashed with the butt. The imprint of the butt plate was clearly visible. The face must have been crushed from above while the murdered man was lying on the ground. No other injury was visible. The smashing field showed typical bloodshot

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The bodies of the dead prisoners were found in such a way that it can be assumed that they were killed as uninjured prisoners by this blow to the butt. Another part of the found showed side rifle stabs in the chest. Similar to the neck shots, two shots at close range were found in the lower jaws. The overall picture of the found dead gave the impression that they had been murdered according to plan on given orders.

After the attack of the Kradschützen Battalion against the bridgehead formed by the Russians south of the Volga on October 18, 1941 east of Staritza, 34 missing persons were reported by the battalion after the end of the fighting, in addition to the dead and wounded. On October 19, 1941, most of the missing were found dead. On the basis of a thorough investigation, which I personally undertook on the spot, I had to conclude that some of those killed during the battle had been subsequently pierced with side-rifle stabs. In addition, I found corpses of which it must be assumed that they were lightly wounded and had been killed with the side-rifle, since apart from the stitches they did not show any wounds that could have resulted in their death.

Self-read, approved and signed.

gez. Dr. Rudolf Sachs, Staff Physician

Dr. Sachs took the oath as a witness.

gez. Dr. Jeremiasgez. Kempe, Sergeant

Protocol

Location, June 26, 1942

Personal details: My name is Ernst August Feuerhake, 28 years old, sergeant, L/heavy artillery division ...

To the point: In November 1941 we had to temporarily evacuate a position near Selisharowa. In the process, about 30 to 40 wounded soldiers were left behind on a dressing station. The very next day we returned to the same place and found that the Russians had gathered the wounded in a heap, doused them with gasoline and burned them. I only saw the charred corpses.

v.g.

The witness takes the oath.

He could not sign the minutes due to injury to both hands.

gez. Dr. Schönegez. Hau, Ludwig

Protocol

Local accommodation, December 11, 1941

Personal details: My name is Martin Rehfeld, 18 years old, Protestant, single, rifleman in the Pioneer Platoon Infantry Regiment, no criminal record

To the point: On December 1, 1941, as an infantry pioneer, I took part in the attack across the Nara, about 60 kilometers west of Moscow.

In the evening of December 1, 1941, we entered a village without being bothered by the Russian yet. Fuses were issued. The soldiers who were not deployed lay down in a barn half sunk into the ground.

In the night of December 2 we had several alarms because the Russian attacked with infantry and tanks. We repelled every attack. Towards morning, however, the attacks became stronger. Now the Russian attacked with five tanks, of which we killed three. The last two we could not get, especially since more and more Russian infantry attacked. These tanks also kept the only exit from the barn under constant fire.

The Russians shot the barn on fire. Due to shell impacts we had many dead and wounded in the barn. I myself was wounded by shell fragments in the left forearm and the right lower leg and could hardly move.

In this situation the battalion commander gave the order that he wanted to break through to the II Battalion and that those who dared should come along. He left it up to each one to decide whether he wanted to join in the breakthrough. He also held out the prospect that he would bring help.

There remained in the barn about 30 seriously wounded and dead and about 30 lightly wounded and healthy.

The fire was spreading more and more. Our ammunition ran out. The Russian infantry came within about 100 meters of the barn. In this situation, a non-commissioned officer sent two Russian prisoners, whom we had with us, with white cloths to the Russians as a sign that we wanted to surrender. Immediately after that the Russians appeared at the entrance of the barn. Everything that could walk had to leave the barn. Russians under the leadership of our prisoners came in to us wounded, took our weapons from us and began to search our pockets for valuables.

While the Russians were searching us, a Russian officer came into the barn. I recognized him as an officer by the fact that he gave orders and also otherwise gave the impression of an officer by his appearance. He walked up and down the barn a few times and examined us. The Russian soldiers continued to search our bags for valuables.

One of my comrades could speak Polish. He talked for a moment with the Russian soldiers. He then told us that he had seen the Russians

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asked if we would be shot; they would have answered that nothing would happen to us, that we would be bandaged and brought back.

In the meantime the officer left the barn. There I saw that a Russian soldier, who was standing at the exit of the barn, put on his rifle and shot one of our wounded lying on the ground. Then the Russians went through our ranks and shot one wounded man after another. I was lying between two seriously wounded men and had already pulled my steel helmet over my face because of the embers falling from the roof. When the shooting started, I did not move. The Russians obviously thought I dead, because they passed me over

In several cases they shot badly, for I heard my comrades cry out. Even my neighbor on the left was not immediately fatally shot; he cried out terribly. Only the second shot extinguished his life.

When that was over, the Russians left the barn.

I still had not given up hope of help. But if I didn't want to burn to death, I had to try to get out into the open. After a while I rolled to the exit, which in the meantime had been buried by falling debris. With the help of a telephone box, on which I could put my healthy foot, I managed to push the rubble away so far that I gained the open air. However, I had to remain in the barn for quite a while, because the Russian was still outside.

Outside I was rolling behind a woodpile when I heard German machine gun fire. I was then found by my

comrades.

v. g. u.

gez. Martin Rehfeld, shooter

The witness took the oath.

Closed:

gez. Mütthergez. Goehler

Protocol

Location, June 24, 1942

Personal details: My name is Alfred Funke, I am 27 years old, single, medical non-commissioned officer. 2./SAützen-Regiment... At present reserve hospital... I.

To the point: On December 6, 1941, while marching from Venev to Tula, we passed through a village occupied by Russian units that had broken through. In this village, the previous night, a battalion of the infantry regiment.... was in quarters. The Russians attacked this battalion by surprise during the night, making prisoners of about 30 to 40 members of the battalion. After a short firefight, the Russians evacuated the village in flight. Since my company commander had told me that in

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I myself went to the village pond to make sure that German soldiers, who were tied to ladders and sleds, had stuck their bodies into the pond through holes made in the ice for this purpose and had then frozen to death. At the village pond I noticed that three or four members of the infantry regiment... had been nailed by the Russians by their hands and feet to ladders or Russian sleds. The Russians had cut holes in the thick ice and then stuck the nailed comrades into the water, about halfway up. The comrades were still looking out of the water with their chests and heads. When I picked up these unfortunate victims, they were frozen in the ice as a result of the severe cold prevailing at the time (about 40 degrees below zero). According to my observation, the comrades of the infantry regiment who died in this way... lived when they were slung on the ladders and put into the icy water. For the places where the nails had been driven through had bled. In addition, the facial expression and the look in the eyes of all the corpses were so distorted with pain that one could clearly see on the faces of these comrades that they had been subjected to inhuman tortures before their death. Furthermore, a private of the infantry regiment..., who had managed to escape during the Russian attack on the village and find shelter in a cellar, told me that he had observed from his hiding place how the Russians carried away comrades of his were fastened to ladders and that these comrades had screamed terribly

Near the village, in the open field, I also found the body of a major of the infantry regiment.... This corpse had the most severe mutilations. Both eyes were cut out and the tongue was cut off.

v. g. u.

gez. Alfred Funke, Sergeant

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmann
gez. Ursula Guntrum

Protocol

Location, September 10, 1942

My name is Josef Heck, I am 23 years old. Lance Corporal, 5th Infantry Regiment ..., currently Reserve Hospital I...

To the matter: In December 1941 I was with still other comrades in the area of Kaluga on the march to the 5th /Infantry Regiment..., to which we had been assigned. In the forest area the lance corporal Albert and I came

across by chance and away from the forest path while stepping out on a

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Russian panjesledge. On the same was the body of a German soldier, lying on his back, nailed through the hands and through the feet. In the places through which the nails were driven, we noticed blood. The corpse was dressed only in a German military sweater and German uniform pants. The uniform skirt and boots were missing. These items were apparently taken by the Russians.

f. g. u. gez. Josef Heck The witness was sworn.

signed Dr. Hofmann signed Arno Geyer

Protocol

Local accommodation, March 21, 1942

1. Witness Schaer. My name is Bruno Schaer, I am 27 years old, of Protestant faith, first sergeant with the S./Infanterie-Regiment...

The battalion had suffered casualties in the attack on December 30, 1941. After the village of Jamky had been taken by other troops on January 8, I received an order from my company commander on January 11, 1942, to investigate the company's dead from the attack on December 30, 1941. I reported to the battalion command post of another battalion at Jamky. There I was directed to a hollow where about 20 bodies of German soldiers had been gathered. With one exception, the soldiers lying there were stripped to their underwear, and some were completely naked. The legs of at least four corpses had been chopped off at knee level. These were smooth cuts, the legs must have been chopped off with a sharp instrument. The legs lay scattered several hundred meters away, in some cases the boots had been stripped off.

Among the dead comrades were some who were known to me to be married, namely, Corporal J., 6./Infantry Regiment.... Sergeant K., 6./Infantry Regiment..., Private P., 8./Infantry Regiment... and Rifleman B., 8./Infantry Regiment.... In these the ring fingers were broken out, obviously to take the wedding ring with them. On other corpses, too, I saw that the ring fingers had been broken off, and in some cases half of the hands had been chopped off. I also found that the faces of several people had been smashed in. These were smashes of the skull by means of blunt force. The smashes were obviously caused by blows from pistons. I also saw that one soldier had his eye gouged out.

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In all of the above cases, these are not wounds, but intentionally inflicted mutilations.

v. g. u.

counted. Bruno Schaer

2nd witness Schaal. My name is Gerhard Schaal, I am 22 years old, of Catholic faith, a farm laborer in my civilian profession, currently a private with the 8./Infantry Regiment...

The witness stated the same, which is set down in the testimony of the witness Schaer. This testimony was read to him. He then stated:

This statement is correct, I make it the subject of my own statement.

The witness added: "At that time I belonged to the search party led by Sergeant Major Schaer.

v. g. u.

counted. Gerhard Schaal

The witnesses Schaer and Schaal took the witness oath.

Closed:

gez. Dr. Eßnergez. Flessel

Protocol

Location, June 26, 1942

My name is Alfred Henneberger, I am 20 years old, single, rifleman, 11th Infantry Regiment..., currently reserve hospital...

To the point: On January 16, 1942, at Novo-Pekrowka (near Feodosia), when the Russians attacked in strong superiority, we had to retreat, leaving 4 to 5 men wounded. The day after next we recaptured the area in a counterattack and found our wounded dead. The soldier from my company was particularly badly mauled. He had both eyes gouged out and his ears cut off. He also had bayonet wounds in his stomach and his genitals were cut off. The other corpses of my comrades mostly had their eyes cut out.

On February 28, 1942, we were deployed in the Crimea on the southwestern shore of the Sea of Azov. Romanian units were fighting there together with us. Once on this section, after a Russian attack, I saw the corpses of about 50 Romanian soldiers who had bullet wounds and also had multiple bayonet wounds in the abdomen and chest. Going back, we had found that these Romanian soldiers were only

-105- were wounded. So they were murdered in defenseless condition by the Russians by bayonet stabs.

v. g. u.

gez. Alfred Henneberger

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmann

gez. M. Weiland

Protocol

Location, May 2, 1942

My name is Karl Schneider, 4./Infantry Regiment..., I am 22 years old.

To the point: On January 31, 1942, we were in the area south of Kharkov northwest of Isyum. The battalion sent out a fuse in the strength of a platoon, from which some time later only one man returned and reported that the fuse had been raided by the Russians. When we then proceeded and arrived at the scene of the raid, we found 35 dead comrades, a larger number of whom had the most serious mutilations. The eyes of three non-commissioned officers had been gouged out, and the ring fingers of others had been cut off. One soldier had his sidearm pierced through the head from the chin so that the tip was sticking out of the top of the skull. One dead man was completely undressed and was frozen to the ground. The dead had also been stripped of medals and decorations. By the way, the bearers of the Iron Cross had been especially badly beaten up by the Russians. Some of the dead soldiers had pain-distorted faces, so that it can be assumed that the mutilations had been made on them while they were still alive.

v. g. u.

gez. Karl Schneider

The witness was duly sworn.

gez. Dr. Heinemanngez. Momsen

Protocol

Location, April 29, 1942

Personal information: My name is Robert Decken, I am 28 years old, 9th / Infantry Regiment...

To the point: At the end of January 1942 I took part in a reconnaissance party of my company in the direction of Put-Niza. We crossed the Düna between Surash and Welisch. In a forest we found five German soldiers hanging from trees. They were infantrymen from another regiment. Since we

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As we had to move on quickly, we did not look at the bodies to see if they had bullet or stab wounds.

A few days later, even in January 1942, in a forest between Surash and Put-Nitsa, I saw a raided German sledge column with about 20 German soldiers lying dead. The dead showed mutilations. Some of them had their eyes cut out, others had their hands cut off.

v. g. u.

counted Robert Decker

The witness then took the oath in accordance with the regulations.

gez. Dr. Heinemanngez. Martha Häberle

Protocol

Corps Headquarters, January 31, 1942.

Lieutenant Döring appears and, when questioned and admonished to tell the truth and reminded of the

importance of the oath, states the following:

Personal details: My name is Hans-Friedrich Döring, I am a lieutenant, corps supply commander ... 23 years old, a believer in God.

When questioned: IA was in Feodosia on January 23, 1942. I took part in the fighting around Feodosia and was wounded there.

Yesterday I saw the following with my own eyes:

To the point: Inthe former German military hospital, which was housed in a mosque-like building, the bodies of about 50 German soldiers lie in two large rooms. They are, in my opinion, severely wounded who could not be taken with them during the clearing of Feodosia because of their condition, or such wounded who had otherwise fallen into the hands of the Russians. Some of them are wearing the red hospital tag, and in some of them you can see that one of their legs had been amputated. The corpses are all mutilated, some horribly. Some have their heads smashed to a shapeless mass with blunt objects, probably butt blows. Some have had their ears cut off, others their noses[The gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced]. Many show several of the designated mutilations. Some corpses are completely unclothed, others are dressed in a shirt. Some have full uniforms on.

Immediately next to the military hospital, to the right of the entrance to the building, there is a niche in the wall that is open at the top. In it lie the corpses of a number of German soldiers, partly naked, partly dressed with a shirt. The corpses lie exactly next to each other in several rows. Some of them have their hands and feet bound with bandages, others have their hands tied to the body by a shackle.

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have been tied to the body. The bodies are under a layer of ice. Obviously, the wounded were put there alive, then doused with water. Death was then caused by freezing. On these corpses mutilations as described above were not to be seen. The sight was horrifying.

I have told the plain truth, concealed nothing and added nothing.

v. g. u.

signed Hans-Friedrich Döring

Lieutenant Döring is sworn in as prescribed.

gez. Dr. Wilhelmgez. Janssen, Sergeant

Court Martial Councilor

Protocol

Army Headquarters, February 2, 1942

Staff physician Rudolf Burkhardt appears and, having been familiarized with the facts of the case, admonished to tell the truth and reminded of the importance of the oath, declares the following when questioned:

Personal details: My name is Rudolf Maximilian Kossuth Burkhardt, 31 years old, staff physician at the service post number..., of Protestant faith.

To the point: The day after the reoccupation of Feodosia I came to Feodosia. I was already in Feodosia before the occupation of Feodosia by the Russians with my military hospital, the military hospital of the medical company During the occupation of Feodosia by the Russians I myself was not present, since at that time I was on duty off Sevastopol. Through my senior physician, Dr. Schwerin, I learned that during the occupation of Feodosia by the Russians about 60 to 70 severely wounded had to be left behind in the local hospital in Feodosia. When I returned there after the reoccupation of Feodosia by German troops, there were no more German wounded in the local hospital. There had been eleven Russians prisoners of war in the local hospital. These had also remained behind when the hospital was cleared I met five of the eleven Russians. They told me

the following: On the first two days of the Russian occupation of Feodosia nothing had happened to the German seriously wounded who had to be left behind in the military hospital. In the night from the second to the third day, drunken Russian sailors came and fired wildly in the military hospital. Six of the Russian prisoners of war were shot. The remaining five escaped and hid. While they

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When they left, they heard the terrible screaming of the German wounded. They were not able to observe what happened to the German wounded at first. In the morning of the day after next, they were on the beach and saw the German wounded lying dead in the water. They could not give any details about the nature of the injuries. One prisoner of war, however, claimed that the German wounded had been thrown alive onto the beach near the water. He had not seen this himself. In the meantime I had been told that there was a large hill on the beach. I went to the mound and noticed that a hand with a cramer's splint was sticking out of it. I then had the mound opened. After removing a narrow layer of sand about the width of a hand, I found that corpses were piled up underneath. According to the local population, there should have been a total of 55, which proved to be correct according to the observations made. The following day I had the bodies removed from the mound. I was able to establish without a doubt that the corpses were seriously wounded from my military hospital. I was also able to identify some of the corpses as a result of the nature of their war wounds. Most of the corpses were still wearing plaster bandages and splints. On some of the corpses I was able to identify so-called wash skin. From this, however, it cannot be determined that the corpses came into contact with water while they were still alive, because wash skin is sometimes formed by contact with water, even on fresh corpses. However, I conclude from the fact that frostbite of the first, second and third degree was found on the uncovered limbs of many corpses, that the severely wounded must have been lying on the beach and exposed to the cold during their lifetime. In my opinion, frostbite of this extent cannot occur on corpses. For the most part, the corpses had head and chest shots. In some, pieces of the back of the head were missing as a result of being shot at close range. In some corpses, the head was crushed by a blunt object. Partly without blood circulation, partly with blood circulation. From the fact that the crushing was done with blood circulation, one can conclude that the crushing of the skull was done while the corpse was alive. The plaster casts were partially broken. Blood and pus had emerged from the fracture fissures. This also leads to the conclusion that the severely wounded man, in whom these features were found, must have been alive when the fracture of the plaster bandage occurred. A grappling hook was lying near the mound. It could not be determined whether this had been used in the slaying of the wounded. Landward of the mound, immediately behind it was a wall on which traces of blood and brain were clearly visible. About 50 meters from the mound lay the body of a wounded man, -109- covered with sand. 10 meters further on lay another German corpse, encased in a layer of glass due to continued over-washing with seawater. An exact injury could not be seen as a result of its condition. It could not be determined whether the body had already been brought there during its lifetime.

In a Russian cemetery more than 100 corpses of German soldiers were found, which were brought together in a house and inspected by me. Among them were about 60 wounded soldiers who had already received medical treatment, as could be seen from the bandages and splints. These corpses, numbering about 100, clearly showed characteristics that justified the conclusion that they had been beaten to death with blunt objects. I could not detect the crushing of a skull. Only with some corpses I could determine that they had been beaten to death with sharp objects, obviously with spades.

I would like to note the following: A German-speaking woman in Feodosia told me that during the occupation of Feodosia by the Russians, on the street near her house, very close to the Russian hospital, there had lain a wounded German soldier with a severe thigh injury, to whom she had brought some water from time to time. He froze both hands and whimpered day and night. After three days a uniformed Russian woman came by. Whether she was a doctor or a commissar, she did not know. This woman had informed Russian sailors, who had killed the German wounded man by shooting him in the face.

I have not seen any corpses in which it has been established without any doubt that their eyes had been squeezed or gouged out while they were still alive.

A German-speaking Russian civilian, whom I had met earlier, told me the following when I asked him why the

German wounded had been shot: He had asked the commissar of the 9th Rifle Corps why the German wounded were shot. He told him that it was a matter of course on the basis of Stalin's authoritative order of November 6, 1941, and that it was therefore carried out according to plan at his (the commissar's) instigation.

gez. Rudolf Burkhardt, Staff Surgeon and Company Commander

The witness shall be sworn in accordance with the regulations.

gez. Dr. Jahn, Councilor of War Courts

gez. Corporal Wanitschek

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Protocol

Location, June 18, 1942

My name is Gerhard Thieme, I am 27 years old, married, sergeant, 5th / artillery regiment... at the moment reserve hospital...

To the point: In February 1942, after the recapture of Feodosia, we also entered the city and set up a V.B. post there. While searching for a suitable place for the V.B. post, I also came across a mosque-like building. There I saw about 130 to 140 corpses of German soldiers lying there. These were German wounded whom the Russians had murdered before clearing Feodosia. Most of the corpses still wore their bandages, so that it was immediately clear to any observer that they were wounded men who had been murdered in this defenseless condition by the Russians before their escape. All the corpses had multiple stab wounds. In a large part of them the skull had been smashed in. In several of the corpses I saw that the eyes had been gouged out or the mouth had been slit open at the side with a bayonet. In two or three cases the tongue had been cut out.

At the same time, several bodies of German soldiers were washed up on the coast of Feodosia near our position, mutilated in the same way as the wounded by the Russians. The infantry units deployed in Feodosia searched the coast with boats for bodies of members of their unit who were still missing.

v. g. u.

gez. Gerhard Thieme, Constable

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Hofmanngez. Corporal

Crown

Protocol

Division Staff Headquarters, March 9, 1942.

My name is Herbert Ziekur, I am 36 years old, a Protestant. Senior priest with the staff of the ...InfantryDivision, fieldpost number .

To the matter: On February 24 and 25, 1942 I visited the infantry regiment subordinated to us at that time.... The adjutant of one of the battalions (I can't say for sure which battalion it was) pointed out to me that near the Ras Troitsdiatyj station there should be fallen soldiers of the regiment who were not buried yet. - I am the graves officer of the division. He pointed out to me that some of the fallen could not be identified because they were replacements who had arrived only a few days earlier, and because the fallen did not have any papers with them.

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would have. I then immediately had the intention to contact the station or the railroaders there about the funeral, but before that I had to go again briefly to the division command post in Be-reka. When I was at the Ic of the division, by chance also a call arrived from Staff Sergeant Neubauer of the field railroad from Ras Troitschatyj because of the funeral. That was on February 26, 1942, and on the same day I went by sledge to Raz Troitsdiatyj

(this is located on the Kharkov - Losovaya railroad line, about 60 km south of Kharkov as the crow flies). Here the staff sergeant received me and led me to the place about 2 km south of the station on the railroad line, where the corpses of 42 German soldiers were gathered. The staff sergeant told me that the bodies were scattered all over the area, especially on the railroad embankment.

The first impression was shocking, well I saw immediately that very many of the comrades were mutilated in the worst and crudest catfish.

So I found that a sergeant's left arm had been dislocated and violently torn off. One could clearly see that it was not a gunshot wound. Another rank - I think I can say with certainty that it was also a non-commissioned officer - had the front of his skull smashed in at least the size of the palm of his hand in such a way that the brain had come out. This was unmistakably due to blunt force.

Several had their noses cut off and their eyes gouged out. Very many soldiers had their ring fingers cut off. It could be stated with certainty that apparently all the soldiers except one, who wore rings, had their fingers cut off and the rings robbed. One soldier had all the fingers of his left hand cut off so that the tendons were visible.

I also noticed that a number of soldiers had their pants and underpants pulled down and their limbs mutilated. Upon questioning, I believe I can state that a piece of the soldier's limb had been cut off.

With all corpses it had to be stated that they had been plundered and everything had been taken away from them. This led to the fact that two corpses, which had nothing in the way of clothing, papers or other identifying features, could not be identified.

17 of the fallen could be identified with the help of the dog tags. The others were missing the dog tags, but it could be seen that they were one lieutenant with E. K., two sergeants with E. K. and the rest were non-commissioned officers and riflemen with E.K..

I also noticed that the ranks from NCO upwards were badly battered. -112-

The staff sergeant also told me that the local Russians, who had been called in to prepare the grave, were horrified and outraged by this mutilation.

v. g. u.

gez. Herbert Ziekur Wehrmacht Pastor

The witness was sworn in.

gez. Dr. Nagelgez. Münnich, Private

Protocol

Local accommodation, July 16,

1942 *Personal details:* Hans Heinrich Weber, Lieutenant, 28 years old, married, Company Commander 7, Infantry Regiment... On July 11, 1942, I received the order to take the village of Krutoi (east of the Aidar River) with my company. I stopped at 196.9 and divided my company after I found out that the place was occupied by the enemy. After the company had advanced about 150 meters, a stalemate occurred:

My men had come across fallen German soldiers. Among the corpses was found a severely wounded man - shot in the hip - who expressed his joy at being found by German soldiers. This man reported to me verbatim, "If I had not played dead, they would have beaten me to death, too." He had been completely looted by the Russians and stated that during the looting he played dead. He was presumed dead by the Russians. A second seriously wounded man was still found. I was told by members of the company that a third severely wounded man was also recovered.

After I had completed my tasks in the village of Krutoi, I went to a group of trees in the middle of the village, where, based on the order I had given earlier, all the bodies that had been found were gathered for burial. I counted 28 fallen. I had to make the following observations:

1. One body had its skull split from top to bottom.
2. The skull of one of the fallen had been crushed; I had the impression that the foot had been kicked into the crushed skull.
3. On a third corpse I found that the abdomen.... [the gruesome mutilations can hardly be reproduced].
4. One man had his genitals cut off.
5. Four men had their eyes gouged out.

6. One man had the last three fingers of his left hand chopped off. Among the corpses was a row of fresh bandages. Also among the corpses was a medic with a chest shot.

The men in charge of the recovery reported to me that the bodies had been plundered.

f. g. u.
gez Weber

The witness was sworn in accordance with the regulations.

gez. Köhlergez. Baumann

Protocol

Location, October 6, 1942 *My*

name is Martin Stark, I am 30 years old, private, Lw.-Bau-Bataillon...

To the point: It may have been about the beginning of July 1942 when I saw 7 to 8 anti-aircraft soldiers near Polozk, northwest of Vitebsk. They were lying 30 to 50 meters from the road on which their truck was parked. This truck was riddled with gunfire. The flak soldiers were completely undressed and robbed of all their belongings. One of them was described to me by an anti-aircraft soldier as a field chaplain. He had a large cross cut across his chest. They had also cut off his genitals and placed them on his chest. Some of the other soldiers had had their eyes gouged out or their noses cut off. They also had a lot of stitches in their bodies. Some of them had their hands chopped off or cut off. Since at that time the front was already near Welish, the soldiers could only have been attacked by Russian gangs.

About three to four weeks later, my unit was deployed near Vitebsk to build an airfield. We fetched logs from a forest. Once we had gone to the airfield with the logs, we had left four men in the forest. After about two hours we returned to the same place and found all four comrades murdered by Russian gangs. They were all four naked and robbed of all their belongings. One of them had his genitals cut off, the second had both eyes gouged out, and the third had both his eyes gouged out and his nose cut off. The fourth was completely stabbed in the body. The other three also had stitches in their bodies.

v. g. u.
gez. Martin Stark

The witness took the oath.

gez. Dr. Schönegez. Heinz Goslar

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Thus the Soviets conducted their war from the first to the last day. In the trial against General der Infanterie Wöhler the war diary No. 3, Ia of AOK VIII of 18. 1.1944 was presented, in which General Offenbacher had entered at 19.20

"21 Germans liberated, including three wounded, 15 Hiwi. Found: 25 mutilated German corpses." But those who believe that these killings were exclusively deplorable transgressions and crimes of individual Red Army soldiers are mistaken. In the course of the war a number of official orders, reports and operation reports of the Red Army were captured, which irrefutably prove that the murder of German prisoners during the war was handled quite officially by the Soviets.

Below are two examples:

Message

(Translation from Russian)

From December 1, 1941 to December 6, 1941 inclusive, 15 prisoners of war of the German army were brought up.

1. 7 men - 29th Mot. Inf. 3rd Mot. Div. - 1. "G.M."-Sdiützen- Div.
2. 5 men - 478th Inf. Reg. 258th Inf. Div. - from a ski battl.
3. 2 men-478th Inf. Reg. 258th Inf. Div.-136th or 140th Panzer Battl.
4. 1 man-351st Inf. Reg. 183rd Div.-110th Rifle Div. total of 15 men.

Note: 100 prisoners of war made by the 1. "G.M." Rifle Division were shot on the orders of the division's commissars in view of the complicated situation.

3 Men were transferred to the 43rd Army.

8 men were shot by the ski battalion.

4 Men were shot and killed by the 222nd Rifle Division.

In total 115 men were shot.

The Chief of the Reconnaissance Department of the Staff of the 3 3rd Army

December 8, 1941

gez. Captain Potapov

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Telegram

The Representative of the Foreign Office to the Army High Command To the Foreign Office

August 12, 1941

In the captured operation report No. 11* of the 13th of last month, 10 o'clock, of the staff of the 26th Division, 1 km west of Slastya, in the forest north of Opushka, it says: "On the battlefield the enemy left about 400 dead; about 80 men had surrendered, who were shot." Reported by the Chief of Staff of the 26th Armored Division, Lieutenant Colonel Kimbar, the head of the I. Division Major Khrapko.

signed v. Etzdorf Rittmeister

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Attachment

Operation Report No. 11, 13 July 1941, 10 a.m., 26th Division staff, northern edge of forest, 1 km west of Slastjena, map 50,000.

(Translation from Russian)

1. During July 7-9, 1941, the enemy completed the division's encirclement by opening into the Chonovo-Ugolje section.

2. As a combat result of the reconnaissance bodies it was established that the enemy was passive in front of the front of the division on the Dutj River during the period from July 7 to 9 and cut off the routes of departure to Khonovo-Ugolje by a lunge into the flanks.

On 9.7.1941, at 12 o'clock, a strong detachment was sent out with the mission to destroy the enemy's reconnaissance forces in the Chonowo section. While falling out of Chonowo, the division encountered rifle and machine gun fire from the section of forest edges northeast of Chonowo from prepared positions. A battle ensued, the result of which was as follows:

On our side two Red Army soldiers and the commander of the anti-tank battery wounded.

On rare of the enemy one machine gun car and about three light machine guns destroyed.

Until darkness fell, the enemy stubbornly held the defensive section.

On 9. 7. 1941, at 4 o'clock, our reconnaissance detected a movement of the SS Division to the northeast in the direction of Chonowo-Vendorosh. Mines were laid by a reconnaissance detachment on the SS Division's route of march, causing 3 tanks of the enemy to explode. At the same time, an infantry reconnaissance division operating in the Chonovo-Ugolje section detected the advance of the enemy's motorized infantry and tanks to the northeast.

At 7:30 p.m., reconnaissance revealed that the enemy had cut off the division's departure routes, occupying mainly the Ugolje, Pervomaisky, Khonovo-Kotzne and Kakatovka points.

At 7 p.m. orders arrived from the corps staff, according to which the division was to move to new defensive section on the line Guslishche-Saltanovka.

At 10:30 p.m. the division in execution of the corps order started the march: Staraya Lyada, Bokatovka, Kurgan, Demashkovka, Zaboloty, Shabin, Guslishche.

On 10.7. 1941, at 3.45 a.m., the division staff, marching under the cover of the 51st Panzer Regiment, was suddenly -117- near the village of Kurgan.

with enemy rifle, machine gun and mine launcher fire. The enemy had in time taken the prepared position on the eastern edge of the forest 1 km west of Kurgan.

Through reconnaissance troops sent out, it was established that the enemy, in strength of no more than one infantry battalion with artillery and mine launchers, had taken up a defensive position on the eastern edge of the forest, 1 km west of Kurgan-Nisovka.

At 5:00 a.m. the 52nd Panzer Regiment and the Motorized Rifle Regiment began to move up, having been given the task of destroying the enemy in the Nizovka section with an advance in a southeasterly direction and in cooperation with the 51st Panzer Regiment, and then to begin the march in accordance with the division's orders. The result of the battle in the Kurgan-Nizovka section was the destruction of a battalion of the Pioneer Regiment, a liaison battalion, as well as other rearguard parts of the German division, a pioneer regiment and other small subdivisions and rearguards. Two enemy light bombers were shot down with anti-aircraft machine guns.

On the battlefield, the enemy left about 400 dead. About eighty men had surrendered and were shot.

The attack of the 52nd and the motorized rifle regiment on the flank and in the rear of the enemy hit the latter completely unexpectedly, so that the remaining units of the enemy retreated in the southwestern direction towards Sa-brodje (5 to 7 km southwest of Kurgan).

In addition, the following were destroyed by artillery fire: 2 tanks, a radio station, about 50 machine gun trucks and 30 trucks with pioneer equipment. The howitzer artillery proved particularly effective, its fire completely silencing the enemy's mine launchers and artillery operating in the direction of Kuchin (6 km southwest of Kurgan).

As it continued to march, the division was heavily bombed by enemy air power from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on July 10, 1941.

As a result of the fighting and the air raid, the division suffered the following losses: in dead 7 men, in wounded 11 men.

3. In the course of July 11-12, 1941, the division took over the defense of the Tumanovka-Golynetz section according to plan and reestablished combat capability in the groves east and south of Kochurino.

On 13. 7. 1941, at 5 o'clock, detachments of the division took over the defensive section on the line Khoroshki, Little Bushkovo according to the attached plan.

Commander of the Staff of the 26th Armored Division Commander of the I. Division
Kimbar, Lt. Col. Chrapko, Maj.

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Numerous Soviet prisoners of war came forward in captivity and testified that the commissars in particular gave official orders to the Red Army soldiers to murder the German prisoners.

From the numerous documents that statement of Vasily Kisilov:

I Vasily Kisilov, born in 1913, from the village of Kotsdiegorovka in Kursk Oblast, a member of the Rifle Regiment 406, I Battalion, 2nd

Company, 3rd Platoon, hereby testify that the platoon commander, Lieutenant Kolesnichenko, -120-

on January 17, 1942, in Shakhovo, in the platoon's quarters, at a meeting before the January 18 attack on Leski, said the following:

"The regimental commissar has ordered: No prisoners will be taken, all Deutdien will be slain. No one is to be left alive."

500 000 German soldiers murderedPartisan Soviet Union

On July 3, 1941, Josef Stalin called on the civilian population of the USSR to resist the Germans over the Moscow radio, stating, among other things:

"In areas occupied by the enemy, form partisan units on foot and horseback and diversionary squads to fight the enemy, ignite partisan warfare everywhere. Blow up bridges and roads, destroy telephone and telegraph lines and set fire to the forests, supply depots and railroad trains. In occupied areas, conditions must be made intolerable for the enemy and his helpers, they must be pursued and destroyed wherever they are, and all their measures must be thwarted."

Stalin called on the civilian population to fight, thus beginning one of the bloodiest and most criminal chapters of World War II. The partisan struggle was not born out of the will of the Russian peoples to resist, but was initially very laboriously organized by a central partisan movement staff formed immediately after Stalin's speech in Moscow on July 3, 1941.

Marshal Voroshilov took over the supreme command, Lieutenant General P. K. Ponomarenko directed the entire operations as Chief of Staff. All partisan groups were under the command of the Communist Party, which sent its best agitators and organizers from Moscow and Leningrad across the front lines into the rear. Voroshilov also belonged to the Politburo of the Communist Party, and Ponomarenko was Secretary of the CC of the CP of Belarus.

Subordinated to the central partisan movement staff in Moscow:

The Ukrainian partisan movement staff under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev, who was assisted by Major General Strokatski as staff deputy.

The Belorussian partisan movement staff, led by Lieutenant General Ponomarenko himself.

The Kuban partisan movement staff, which was headed by P. K. Ignatov. -122

However, all these staffs would not be located with the partisans in the area of operation, but in Moscow. The partisan units themselves were led exclusively centrally by radio.

Simultaneously with the formation and organization of the partisan groups, an underground movement of the Communist Party was created, which cooperated closely with the partisans. The members of the Communist underground organization stayed behind as ordered and did not flee to the East, but let themselves be overrun by the German advance. Certain partisan centers were formed, which set up espionage, sabotage and murder groups everywhere in the Sdmeeball system. In the south, behind German front, the first partisan center was formed in the Chernigov area (Ukraine) about 110 kilometers south of Gomel under the leadership of the Secretary of the Territorial Committee of the CP, Lieutenant General Alexey Feodorovich Fedorov. As early as July 4, 1941, during the impetuous German advance, Khrushchev appointed Fedorov secretary of the Ukrainian Underground Movement and assigned the trained partisan specialist Burmistrenko to assist him.

Only active party communists followed the orders and retreated to the swamps and forests, where they had set up rations camps as a precaution. In the beginning there were only a few, in Cholm 240, in Ostersk district 35, in Chernigov 70, but nevertheless in Ukraine the movement soon increased to 900 men. Their actions were initially directed exclusively against anti-communist Ukrainians, who were attacked and murdered in the night.

According to Soviet data, 191 partisan units of 30 to 50 men each were formed in Leningrad in July/August 1941, with a total strength of about 9500 men.

Gradually, the partisans ventured to attack individual German soldiers. Guard posts, dispatch drivers, supply drivers, ambulances or smaller units were attacked. Those unlucky German soldiers who fell into the hands of the partisans were exclusively murdered.

In 1945, a report by Lieutenant General Ponomarenko entitled "Behind the Front Line" was published in London and in New York, and in 1961 the official history of the Soviet partisan struggle "Sovetskie Partisani" was published in Moscow. Both publications report that the Soviet partisans annihilated some 500,000 German soldiers and officers, police officers, and Russian and Ukrainian anti-Communists.

These hundreds of thousands were not killed in an honest fight, but were insidiously murdered in their mass from ambush.

Field Marshal K  chler explained the situation in 1946 before the American military judges in the trial against Field Marshal Leeb and others: "There are

this was extraordinarily one-sided fighting, for the German soldier was easily recognizable, but not the partisan, for he wore civilian clothes."

Soviet radio broadcast daily morning and evening "partisan training sessions" throughout the war, in which precise instructions were given on how to carry out the assassination raids.

Brigadier C. Aubrey Dixon and Otto Heilbrunn, in their 1956 study "Partisans," published one of these radio instructions, which was intercepted by German counterintelligence units:

"How do you eliminate a German sentry? Hunting a German soldier is similar to hunting a partridge. You sneak up on the partridge when it calls, and you hide when it turns its head. The same method is applied to the sentry. With a hatchet, you sneak up on him in the dark. If he walks up and down or keeps a lookout, you have to stand still. If he is deep in thought, you creep up on him slowly. If you are close enough to grab him, hit him on the skull with the axe with full force. Be quick so that he can't cry out first."

The partisans wore neither uniforms nor other distinguishing marks in their murderous business; on the contrary. Often they stripped off the uniforms of the slain and operated in German and later in Romanian, Italian, Hungarian and Slovak uniforms. In doing so, they clearly violated Article I of the Hague Land Warfare Regulations, which stipulates that even irregulars must wear a certain sign recognizable from rifle range, carry their weapons openly, and observe the laws and customs of war.

They had no right to demand to be treated as prisoners of war. This was recognized even by the Allied revenge courts after 1945. In the proceedings against Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, British Justice Collingwood summarized this fact in the statement:

"Whoever could be convicted of franc-tireur activity was not eligible for treatment as a prisoner of war."

The American military tribunal in the proceedings against the German

Southeast generals from:

"They [the partisans] did not have a uniform. Mostly they wore civilian clothes, but also German, Italian and Serbian uniforms, if they could get hold of them. Mostly the Soviet star was worn as a badge. But the evidence showed that it could not be seen from a distance. They also did not carry their weapons openly, except when it was to their advantage. It has not been convincingly demonstrated that the gangs in question here meet the requirements -124-

[lawful warfare] have been fulfilled. The consequence of this, of course, is that the members of these unlawful formations cannot claim to be treated as prisoners of war. The defendants are not guilty of any crime if they killed such prisoners of the resistance movements since they were freedmen."

In specially established partisan schools in Moscow and Leningrad, as well as in other cities, the partisan leaders were trained in all the subtleties of assassination, sabotage and espionage. In addition, the Soviet secret police NKVD maintained its own sabotage, espionage and agent radio schools. Never was an enterprise of assassins more carefully prepared and equipped.

The partisans in the Leningrad area killed 16,000 German soldiers, 629 officers, including 11 colonels and three generals, and shot 67 V-men and 163 members of the Russian anti-communist security units in the first eight months of the Eastern campaign until March 1942.

In the final report, the partisans of the Leningrad region boasted of having killed a total of about 100,000 German officers and soldiers.

In Pleskau, only three partisan groups reported more than 1000 German officers and soldiers liquidated as early as winter 1941. In the Bryansk region, the partisans reported 19,845 murdered German soldiers by May 1, 1942, including 237 officers, 1 general and 2090 Russian policemen who collaborated with the Germans. Ponomarenko boasts of the following top successes: "Among the numerous occupation troops destroyed by Ukrainian partisans in Kharkov were the headquarters of a German infantry division, including General Braun, partisans from Leningrad destroyed a number of enemy trucks and killed General R. von Wirtz and his bodyguard

Partisans from Belarus destroyed the German divisional headquarters under General Jakoby in Borovoya.... Fabian Akinchitz, an important German liaison officer, was killed in his Minsk study. The commander of the town of Baranovichi, Friedrich Wentsch, was killed by partisans. German district and county commanders, officials of the occupation authorities, and the plenipotentiaries responsible for sending Russian citizens to Germany for skaven work were killed again and again. "

But this is only a fraction of the bloody successes of this criminal fight from ambush. Dixon/Heilbrunn write in their study "Partisans": "From German sources it is known that Lieutenant Colonel v. Boddien was shot by partisans, that the Chief of Staff of the 9th Army was wounded by partisans, and that many other senior officers were killed.

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The first two animals never arrived at their destination because they fell into the hands of partisans on the way. Ponomarenko claims that already in the first two years of the war the Soviet partisans succeeded in killing in this way 30 German or allied generals, 6336 German or allied officers and 1520 airmen of all ranks alone.

Only towards the end of the war did the partisans engage in open combat. Before that, they only joined the fight when they were surrounded. Otherwise, they laid mines in the streets during the nights - without regard to the fact that this would also blow up their compatriots with the Panje vehicles - on which supply vehicles and Sankas then drove. Tens of thousands of Germans, as well as Ukrainians and Russians, perished as a result of this cowardly way of fighting.

The partisans silently raided smaller outposts, supply depots, dressing stations, military hospitals, field post offices, or agricultural commanders with strong superior force and assassinated the raiders. They liked to lie in ambush along roads leading through woods, shooting individual messengers or drivers out of the thicket, and, if they felt strong enough, smaller columns as well. They conducted their fight not like soldiers, but like criminals. Often they made use of young girls, old women, small children, who transported explosive charges, provided scouting services and even carried out attacks.

The Yalta partisan group challenged the other partisan groups to a competition in February 1942, the point 1 of which was:

"Every partisan must exterminate at least five fascists (meaning German Landsers) or similar traitors."

Murder as a competition! This had never happened in history until that moment.

The partisan struggle began abruptly with the outbreak of the war. The Russian Communist Party had trained its partisan leadership cadres very carefully, just as the Red Army was trained.

The 7th Armored Division's IC evening report of 24/6/1941 states:

"On 22/6 about four kilometers south of Kalvaiya, on 23/6 about three kilometers west of Olita, 2.5 kilometers east of Olita, and farther east, irregulars (civilians) attacked individual German soldiers who were repairing vehicles or had secluded themselves to sleep at night. In the process, as far as is known so far, two members of the division were shot and several wounded."

In 1941, however, the partisans were not yet able to expand their groups in this way and were working at half strength, so to speak.

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Field Marshal Ritter von Leeb testified in Nuremberg on 20. 4. 1948, among other things:

"In July, the corps intelligence section of the XXVIII. Army Corps was attacked by a partisan group, and when this place was then cleared, 92 German soldiers were found martyred to death."

Towards the fall of 1941, the partisans increased their raids to such an extent that General Command XXX AK Division 1a had to record in its Corps Order No. 55 for the subordinate units:

"It has happened repeatedly that medical units have been ambushed by enemy forces not only on the advance, but also during journeys to remove wounded. In this connection, despite resistance to the point of firing ammunition, ten men of medical personnel were wounded and 33 men of medical personnel were killed in one ambush. Most of the wounded were killed by throwing hand grenades into the ambulances or after being torn out of the ambulance by butt blows and bayonet thrusts. Vigorous measures must be taken immediately for adequate protection of medical units and all wounded transports."

In the trial against General von Salmuth, retired General Walter Botsch made the following affidavit:

"Partisan activity in the Jaila Mountains (Crimea) continued to increase even after the issuance of the order of XXX. Army Corps Ia/Ic of 21. 11. 1941 increased considerably. There were many dead and wounded among the German and Romanian troops due to cowardly raids. I remember two cases:

Ambush of ambulance at night, killing driver and four helpless wounded.

Ambush of dispatch driver of the General Command of the XXX. Army Corps in broad daylight, killing the co-driver, whose burial took place on 26.11.41. There were ten killed and wounded in this raid. Five motor vehicles

were destroyed."

Nevertheless, the actions of the partisans at that time were directed mainly against individual Germans and essentially against those Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars and Russians who were anti-communist and cooperated with the German troops. They felt the murder war the hardest.

The following documents prove how this war was fought.

The General Command of the XXXIX A. K. entered in the war diary on 6. 2. 1942:

"Enemy strips captured German soldiers of boots, coats, skirts, etc., and then knocks them down." (Statement of an escaped sergeant of the 6th A. R. 168 at Alexandrowka, then also finding 40 dead German soldiers there).

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The statements of Private Großhauser and Private Schilling on the record leave nothing to be desired in terms of clarity.

Protocol

Location, September 7, 1942

My name is Karl Großhauser, I am 30 years old, private, 12th / I.R. -, currently reserve military hospital III...

To the point: On January 21, 1942, I was admitted because of frostbitten feet to the Molvoditzi troop unit near Star. Russa. On the same day a transport of patients was put together, which was probably to be taken to Demjansk in an omnibus. I was also transported. There were about 40 seriously wounded in the bus. The bus itself was clearly marked as a medical vehicle by Red Cross signs on both sides of the vehicle and by a Red Cross flag above the radiator. There were also small Red Cross flags on both fenders above the front wheels. On the way, this omnibus was attacked from all sides in the forest area by Russian partisans in strength of at least 50 men. Since the attack took place in the morning and the weather was clear, is no doubt that the Russian partisans must have realized without further ado that they were attacking a medical vehicle. In response to the attack, the wounded who were still able to walk left the omnibus, including myself. We made our way to our dressing station in Molvoditzi. Later, the road was cleared by an infantry unit. In the meantime, a Sanka brought back 7 or 8 bodies of the severely wounded, who had been murdered by the Russians in a defenseless state in the omnibus. One of these corpses I looked at a bit, I noticed that one side of the head of this comrade was directly split open. Later we drove past the place of the attack again and saw that our omnibus had overturned into the ditch.

Among the partisan gang there were also some Russian soldiers. For the rest, these people wore a rather motley uniform.

f. g. u. gez. Großhauser

The witness was sworn in.

signed Dr. Hofmann signed Betty Prell -128-

Protocol

Location, September 10, 1942

Personal details: My name is Kurt Schilling, I am 28 years old, single, Private S./Infantry Regiment... at the moment reserve hospital...

To the point: Around February 10, 1942, we were to clear a Russian village of partisans near Welisch (in the central section). While approaching this village we were met from all sides by soldiers of a Bavarian unit, who called for our help and told us that a transport of wounded men from their unit had been attacked by Russian partisans in front of the village. Due to heavy fire we could only reach the village and had to retreat. However, we were still able to recover the bodies of the wounded column and take them back with us. As I have heard, we brought back a total of twelve bodies, among them the body of Major B. Some of the people who were seriously wounded died only on our transport back. Personally, I only took a closer look at the corpse of one comrade. This soldier's face was cut and he had a deep gaping wound at the back of his head. I had the impression that this wound had been made with a chisel or a sharp hammer. The wounded were placed on Russian panje sleds. Since the bandages could be seen from afar, the partisans also had to see during the raid that it was a transport of wounded. On February 26, 1942, I was wounded by a Russian explosive projectile in front of Welisch.

f. g. u. gez. Kurt Schilling The witness was sworn in.

signed Dr. Hofmann signed G. Boegler

On September 2, 1942, partisans ambushed a small group of German soldiers and Russian vigilantes near Rzhavez. Three Germans were shot on the spot, seven Germans and two Russians were dragged along. Under the leadership of the partisan commissar Shelisin all nine prisoners were tortured, their eyes were gouged out, ears, noses and genitals were cut off. On top of that, the hands and feet of the two Russians were chopped off.

Lieutenant General (ret.) Friedrich Seizinger testified in Tübingen on April 19, 1948, in the trial against General v. Salmuth:

"Ten field gendarmes were captured by partisans during a partisan operation between Rylsk and Brajanskcr Forest.

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Afterwards they were found lying dead in a village in front of the schoolhouse, completely naked with their genitals and ears cut off and their eyes gouged out. Shortly after, the leader of a company of this battalion, who was also taken prisoner, was mutilated in a similar way by the partisans. These inhuman images were still vividly remembered by the soldiers of this division. In general, it has never been heard that German soldiers who fell into partisan captivity escaped with their lives." Major General Siegfried Heine gave an affidavit in the trial against General v. Salmuth in Neubiberg on May 4, 1948, in which he stated, among other things:

"At the beginning of March 1942, Russian partisans northwest of the Roslaw - Yukhnov road attacked the shelters of the hawesers of the 137th Infantry Division, which was in combat, in the rear and entrenched themselves in the villages close behind the front. The German counter-action was to attack the village of Tinowka, among others, and bring it back into German possession. This did not succeed in the first attack, but the Russians cleared the village the next day. We found those killed and wounded in the attack: 1 officer and about 25 men in Tinowka completely stripped by the Russians, the wounded killed by butt blows and knife wounds, all mutilated. The corpses were robbed, in some cases the ring fingers were cut off." The Ic of the XXXXVIII Panzer Corps reported on 11.11. 1943 in its daily report:

"A liberated German prisoner of war of Pz.Gren.Rgts. 146 (25th Pz. Div.), taken prisoner in the Trylissy area, states that after initial good treatment they were turned over to partisans for guarding and that forty men were shot during a German attack. He himself managed to escape by playing dead."

In the trial against Field Marshal von Kuchler, Dr. jur. Freiherr Ernst von Dörnberg declared in lieu of an oath on March 9, 1948:

"On 13. 11. 1943 an explosive attack took place on the crowded cinema in Porchow (on the railroad line Pleskau - Staraja - Russa). My quarters were not far from the cinema. The attack took place shortly before 8 pm. The casualties were 178 German soldiers dead and 53 seriously wounded."

In the trial against v. Salmuth, Captain (ret.) Otto Hent-zelt testified under oath on April 2, 1948 in Gütersloh, among other things: "In general, I can say that the measures taken by the 2nd Army in fighting the partisans had to be considered very mild, especially if one takes into account the cruel conduct of the fight by rare partisans. For example, the burning of a village, even if the support of the inhabitants could be proved, was ver-

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offered. I know that this order was considered incomprehensibly mild by some members of my company, since the cruel methods of the partisans, bordering on sadism, were generally known. Particularly great excitement was caused not only among the soldiers but also among the civilian population by the case of about 10 members of the Field Gendarmerie, Dept. 581, who were taken prisoner. The corpses of these soldiers were found in the village on the street with their eyes gouged out and their ears and genitals cut off. Similar cruelties were also inflicted by the partisans on the village mayor (starosten) appointed by the Wehrmacht and other community officials or their wives."

The longer the war lasted, the more the criminal struggle was perfected. According to Valdis Redelis, a Latvian expert on the situation, at the beginning of July 1941 there were already more than 33 organized partisan gangs on Ukrainian soil. On July 4, 1941, these gangs received orders from Khrushchev himself to form combat units. Towards the end of 1941, the Ukrainian partisans captured more than 33,000 people for communist underground and partisan work.

In Moscow, in 1961, P. P. Werschigora published the book "Woennoe Twortschestwo Narodnich Mass", in which it is explained that in 1944 in Ukraine there were 220 000 partisans, in Belarus 360 000 partisans, around

Leningrad 40 000 partisans were in action and 250 000 partisans were held in reserve.

Vershigora claims that behind the German front towards the end of the war there were about 700 000 partisans under the central leadership of the Chief of Staff P. K. Ponomarenko. According to his own confession, these partisans murdered from ambush about 500 000 German soldiers.

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The Bombing War against the German Civilian Population The Criminal Lindeman Plan

As a result of the carefully planned and ruthlessly executed burning of German residential areas and inner cities by the British and Americans, many hundreds of thousands of Germans, especially women, the elderly and children, were slain, burned, suffocated or drowned by ruptured water pipes in the air-raid shelters. For most of them it was a slow, agonizing death.

There is no historically accurate information about the number of Germans who fell victim to this Allied mass extermination enterprise. Tens of thousands of families were literally wiped out, along with their ancestors, mothers and children, so that no one ever investigated their whereabouts. Not to speak of trains of wounded, troop transports, groups of children who went to KLV camps, foreign workers, prisoners, travelers who were caught in the bombing storm and burned on the German funeral pyre. In addition, in many cities and towns the registration files were also destroyed and therefore no records of the inhabitants were available. A large part of the corpses could often no longer be found: They had burned to death or could not be recovered from the leveled depths.

Studienrat Hanns Voigt, head of the "Dead Department" of the Dresden Missing Persons Center, described the conditions as follows:

"Never did I believe that death could approach man in so many different forms, never did I think it possible that the dead could be handed over to the graves in so many guises: Burned, charred, dismembered, seemingly sleeping peacefully, contorted in pain, completely cramped, dressed, naked and as a puny heap of ashes. And above all the stinging smoke and the unbearable smell of decay. Of course, I cannot give any binding information about the number of dead, because some reports got lost, did not reach me or were not submitted at all. The number of the dead, which was registered as known or unknown, lies according to my memory with 80,000 to 90,000. I mean that one has with 135,000 dead approximately the correct number." -132-

The truth was even more terrible: the losses of Dresden alone amounted to about 250,000 to 400,000 people.

That is why the total number of 539,000 German civilians who fell victim to Allied aerial murder, cited with extreme caution by the Federal Statistical Office, represents the hardly credible lowest figure of German civilian casualties.

The Zurich newspaper "Die Tat" put the death toll of the Allied area bombing in Germany on January 19, 1955 at 2050000. Unfortunately, this figure will be far closer to the truth.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that every Allied airman, no matter what use he found in this diabolical enterprise, is a war criminal in the sense of the Nuremberg legislation. He is just as complicit in this horrible mass murder as the members of the SD Einsatzkommandos or similar extermination organizations. The only difference between, say, British Marshal Arthur Harris, who commanded the area bombing of Germany, and his colleague Adolf Eichmann is only that the former was retired and the latter was hanged. Both, however, received the order to begin from their superiors. The gruesome result of their missions, however, was the same. When this sad chapter in the history of mankind is brought up, it is customary to explain it both hypocritically and historically incorrectly:

This, he said, was the court of punishment for the German Luftwaffe's air raids on England. Coventry had triggered all this.

This sounds very useful in contemporary terms, but it is incorrect. The truth is different:

England began its attack on German residential areas on the night of May 10-11, 1940, in Mönchengladbach.

For a full five months, Germany endured the systematic murder of its citizens from the air without retaliating against British residential neighborhoods. The German Air Force bombed only decidedly military targets in England during this period. It was not until September 7, 1940, after Churchill had repeatedly ordered Berlin attacked, that Germany began to strike back. Incidentally, as British historian David J. Irving writes, Coventry "was one of the small undertakings, with 380 dead, by the standards of British bomber command."

If these facts, which cannot be disputed, are clarified, then one claims: Germany nevertheless started the air war against civilians; probably not against England, but on 14 May 1940 against Rotterdam.

This is also wrong:

Rotterdam was not a free city, it was tenaciously defended like a fortress by the Dutch army under Colonel Scharroo. The landed deut- -133-

see paratroopers were hard pressed and urgently requested air support.

Nevertheless, the Commanding General of the German XXXIX Army Corps, Lieutenant General Rudolf Schmidt, had received explicit orders from the 18th Army to avoid any useless bloodshed among the Dutch, and he was doing his best to do so.

General Schmidt sent Captain Hoerst with two men and a white flag as parliamentarians to the Dutch. The latter threatened the parliamentarians, tore off their pistols and forced them with upraised hands to the Dutch command post, where Captain Hoerst handed over the ultimatum to the Dutch Colonel Scharroo:

"To the Commandant of Rotterdam, to the Mayor and City Councillors and representatives of the State in Rotterdam. The resistance which is being made in the open city of Rotterdam against the offensive of the German troops forces me, unless your resistance is stopped immediately, to take the necessary and expedient measures. This may result in the complete destruction of the city. I ask you, as a man who possesses a sense of responsibility, to insist that the city be spared this heavy loss. As a sign of agreement, I request you to send immediately a parliamentarian who has the necessary powers. If I do not receive a reply within two hours of the delivery of this communication, I shall be compelled to order the most severe measures of destruction." Scharroo informed the Dutch commander-in-chief, General Winkel-man, who took exception to the fact that the ultimatum had not been signed by General Schmidt. The Dutch Captain Backer was now sent to the Germans. General Schmidt now also signed the ultimatum.

However, much time was lost by this dragging out and postponing the surrender. General Schmidt sent a radio message to Luftflottenkommando 2: "Attack postponed due to negotiations". Unfortunately, this message did not reach all aircraft already on approach, since some of them had already retracted their towed antennas. Thereupon, Lieutenant General Schmidt had red strobe flares fired from the Norderinsel. Since the planes had only the mission to bomb military targets and to spare the civilian population, they flew very low. For this very reason, the right group of the squadron did not notice the stop signals and, while the left group swung off, dropped the bombs as ordered.

Thus, regrettably, 900 Dutch died as victims of the Dutch delaying tactics. However, according to the Hague Regulations, the Germans behaved correctly. The attack on Rotterdam was not aimed at a free city, but at a fortress-like defended city.

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All belligerents strictly adhered to the rule of not attacking free cities and civilian populations until May 10, 1940. On that day, however, Sir Winston Churchill took over the British government in London. That very night - for the first time in history - air raids against civilian populations began.

The perfection of this mass murder from the air, however, mankind owes to Professor Frederick Alexander Lindeman, Churchill's scientific advisor in all questions of air warfare. In sharp contrast to all other scientists, Lindeman put forward the thesis that the bombing war against the German civilian population would bring about the victory of the Allies.

In early 1942, Lindeman, who had meanwhile become Lord Cherwell, demanded in a memorandum from the British Cabinet that the bombing war against Germany be intensified along the following lines: "Bombing must be directed against the houses of the German working class. Middle-class houses in their loosened construction inevitably lead to a waste of bombs."

"If the bombing offensive is directed essentially against the homes of German civilians-factories and military installations are too difficult to spot and hit-it should be possible to destroy half the houses in all cities of more than 50,000 inhabitants." Immediately Lindeman's predecessor, Sir Henry Tizard, spoke out against this, saying that the chances of success of area bombing were "overstated by a factor of five."

Professor P. M. S. Blackett even believed that Lindeman's calculations of success were overstated by a factor of six.

Nevertheless, the British Air Staff decided to break Germany's resistance by air attacks on the German civilian

population. On February 14, 1942, the British government, chaired by Churchill, explicitly approved this intensified mass murder of the German civilian population.

As a first measure, Churchill relieved the previous commander-in-chief of the British bombing squadrons and entrusted it to Marshal Arthur Harris.

Harris received the secret order from the Air Force staff:

"It has been decided that your main target from now on will be the morale of the enemy civilian population, especially the working class."

Marshal Harris went to work immediately. The first victim he chose was Lübeck, which was attacked by 234 bombers on the night of March 28, 1942. The result was 320 dead, 785 wounded and 1044 homes destroyed.

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Rostock was attacked from April 24, 1942: 1765 houses were destroyed, 60% of the old town. Thus began the dance of death of German cities, against which all previous air raids were almost child's play.

On the night of May 30-31, 1942, 900 bombers flew against Cologne. Before the planes departed with their deadly load, the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force, Marshal Sir Charles Portal, sent a memorandum to Marshal Harris: "I hope it is clear that the points of attack are to be the residential areas and not, for example, docks or factories, even if these are specifically mentioned in the beginning. This must be made quite clear to everyone in case it has not yet been understood!"

With this first giant attack, in which 900 bombers participated, flew as the head of the operation Marshal J. E. A. Baldwin. 19 370 homes were destroyed, 469 people were killed, 5027 injured.

Coldly assured, according to Major General J. F. C. Fulles, Marshal Arthur Harris on May 31, 1943, "What Germany has faced in the past was but chicken feed compared to what she will now face ... "

Thus, one city after another was struck or even wiped out.

The following statistics on the bombing of German cities, taken from the British work Richards and Saunders, "Royal Airforce," show most clearly what happened:

Between 3. 9. 1939 and 31. 12. 41, 25 to 1000 tons of bombs fell:

Emden, Bremerhaven, Vegesack, Wilhelmshaven, Cuxhaven, Flensburg, Lübeck, Wismar, Warnemünde, Rostock, Stettin, Osnabrück, Münster, Wesel, Sterkrade, Sottrop, Homberg, Emmerich, Krefeld, M.-Gladbach, Essen, Wanne-Eickel, Gelsenkirchen, Schwerte, Dortmund, Lünen, Kamen, Aachen, Bonn, Mülheim, Koblenz, Frankfurt, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, Munich, Nuremberg, Kassel, Paderborn, Soest, Braunschweig, Magdeburg, Merseburg (Leuna); 1000 to 3000 t on:

Duisburg, Mannheim, Hanover, Bremen, Kiel, Hamburg, Berlin; over 3000 t on: Cologne.

In the period from 1. 1. 1942 to 31. 12. 1943 50 to 5000 t on:

M.-Gladbach, Krefeld, Oberhausen, Bochum, Dortmund, Hagen, Wuppertal, Remscheid, Leverkusen, Mülheim, Bonn, Münster, Osnabrück, Emden, Wilhelmshaven, Cuxhaven, Vegesack, Kiel, Lübeck, Rostock, Warnemünde, Stettin, Braunschweig, Münster, Kassel, Leipzig, Mainz, Darmstadt, Saarbrücken, Karlsruhe, Friedrichshafen, Munich, Pilsen; 5000 to 10 000 t on:

Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Hanover, Bremen, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Mannheim;

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10 000 to 22 000 t:

Cologne, Essen, Hamburg, Berlin.

In the period from 1. 1. 1944 to 5. 5. 1945 2000 to 5000 t on:

Cleve, Wesel, Bottrop, Oberhausen, Homberg, M.-Gladbach, Neuß, Düren, Bonn, Castrop-Rauxel, Hagen, Münster, Osnabrück, Wangerooze, Helgoland, Wilhelmshaven, Harburg, Nordhausen, Leuna, Leipzig, Dresden, Böhlen, Chemnitz, Stettin, Politz, Magdeburg, Saarbrücken, Munich;

5000 to 10 000 t:

Düsseldorf, Neuss, Homberg, Wanne-Eickel, Frankfurt, Mannheim, Nuremberg, Bremen, Hanover, Brunswick, Hamburg, Merseburg;

10 000 to 23 000 t:

Cologne, Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Dortmund, Kiel, Berlin, Stuttgart. Pforzheim was forgotten in this list. Death had many faces

Hamburg was attacked from July 24, 1943. The enterprise was diabolically planned and was diabolically

executed. It was ordered to drop 20 demolition bombs and 120 incendiary bombs on an aerial mine. Even the order in which the bombs were dropped was very precise. First the mines fell and covered the houses, so that the lightly combustible attics were helplessly exposed to the incendiary bombs. Then the heavy demolition bombs destroyed the water pipes, and only now the incendiary bombs roared down.

Harns had specified precisely: The first attack will be flown to exhaust firefighting forces and extinguishing capabilities.

Soon the port city was ablaze. The people who staggered out of the cellars into the open got caught in the boiling asphalt and perished by the thousands. Others could not get out of the cellars because the houses above them had collapsed. The fire hurricane raced and raced; the people, half insane with fear seized by a panic, jumped into the canals and waterways, where they drowned. 55,000 Hamburgers perished in this way. Nearly half could never be salvaged.

Kurt Detlev Möller wrote about the devastating attacks on Hamburg in his book "The Last Chapter" as follows:

"The district of Barmbek and the surrounding parts on the left bank of the Alster, especially Hoheluft and Eimsbüttel, plus the Hagenbeck Zoo in Stellingen, Altona, St. Pauli and Hamburg's city center were devastated. Large fires broke out that could not be extinguished in one day -137-.

were. In the noon hour of that Sunday a huge, sinister cloud of smoke and dust was hanging over the city, which, despite the clear cloudless summer weather, did not allow the sun to break through. The number of 1500 recorded casualties was already extraordinarily high in comparison with previous attacks, and the enemy's intention to strike a devastating blow was already clearly evident. Nevertheless, the losses and damage incurred on this day and even after the second, third and fourth attacks, which also hit Harburg and Wilhelmsburg among other areas, remained reasonably within the expected and feared limits until July 27.

Only the large-scale attack flown in the night of July 27-28 with at least eight hundred aircraft (it was the fifth of the hard blows against the city in the course of this overall action) created a situation in view of which all predictions proved to be human piecemeal. The focus this time was on the districts to the left of the Alster, Rothen-burgsort, Hammerbrook, Hohenfelde, Borgfelde, Hamm, Eilbek, and to some extent again in Barmbek and in Wandsbek. A carpet of bombs of unimaginable density brought about the almost complete destruction of these areas in a very short time. Extensive parts were turned into a single sea of flames in barely half an hour. When, on the night after the next, from July 29 to 30, the same fate befell the districts of Harvestehude, Rotherbaum, Eppendorf, St. Georg, Uhlenhorst and Win-terhude, and again Barmbek, by the heaviest and sixth attack, measured by the number of planes used and munitions dropped, it seemed as if hell had been unleashed over the city of millions. The sunny day had almost turned into night. Horror and despair gripped the people, who saw all their hopes and plans overmastered in just a few days. The fate that Hamburg suffered at that time surpassed in scope and impact - apart from the Tokyo conflagration of 1923 caused by an earthquake - any fire catastrophe of past times. The Hamburg fire of 1942, according to the secret report of the Hamburg police chief of December 1, 1943, must remain a poor reflection of the Hamburg fire of 1943, even considering the conditions of the time. The fire catastrophes of Chicago and San Francisco, the burning of the Paris Opera, all these events, about which scenes of horror of a fantastic and gruesome kind were transmitted by tentmates, pale before the magnitude and the uniqueness of the Hamburg fire of 1943. Its awfulness is revealed in the howling and roaring of the firestorms, the infernal noise of the dying bombs and the death cries of martyred people, as in the icy silence after the attacks. The language fails before the size of the horror, which ten days and nights the -138-.

shook people and whose traces were indelibly written on the face of the city and its people.

According to conscientious official estimates, more than 1,200 mine bombs, 25,000 high explosive bombs, 3 million stick incendiary bombs, 80,000 phosphorus incendiary bombs or American 100-lbs liquid incendiary bombs, 5,000 liquid incendiary bombs of 250 lbs. and 500 phosphorus canisters were dropped over Hamburg in those days. One district after the other sank with irreplaceable cultural property into rubble and ashes. The wildfires, which formed in a short time in the summer heat and drought and due to the rapid failure of the water supply, soon grew into gigantic fire pits in which all life was caught as in a trap. Above and within them howled thunderous firestorms, ignited by the now increasing temperature differences of 600, 800 or even 1000 degrees Celsius, which finally merged into a single hurricane.

Before him every possibility of rescue was destroyed. What was started by human will to destroy was completed by unleashed nature. Thick trees up to a meter in diameter were uprooted smoothly, glowing beams flew, laying

new sources of fire, eerily through the air. Children, torn from their parents' hands by the forces of nature, were seen whirling into the fire like branches and leaves.

People like torches, burning on the asphalt! Women, men and children, who had managed to escape from the hell of the glowing hot cellars and bunkers after an often terrible struggle and who now thought they had been saved on the street, fell to the ground stunned by the all-destroying force of the heat and died in moments. Soon the streets were covered with hundreds of corpses. What scenes of horror took place in the air-raid shelters, which were buried in large numbers, no human imagination will ever succeed in measuring or describing. Horror reigned even in the few areas not ravaged by fire. All the colors of the vegetation covered with the finest ash dust were as if they had died. The smell of burning filled the entire city. When, after the seventh attack in the night of August 2 to 3, which was not fully effective due to a thunderstorm with cloudburst-like rain, the great silence finally descended on the city, which had been devastated in large parts, more than 250,000 of the 556,000 individual dwellings had been completely destroyed and around 48,000 people had lost their lives. Almost one million, more than ten times the number that had been prepared for as a precautionary measure in the worst case, were immediately on the run. Numbers cannot give even an approximate idea of the magnitude of this catastrophe. However, they acquire a certain life when one knows that the losses of the British island by bombs and V-weapons amounted to 60 000 persons -139-

can be estimated. According to this, in this one battle alone, Hamburg suffered in a few days four-fifths of all the deaths lost by the entire British mainland during the entire war from air raids and V-weapon fire."

Not enough coffins for Hanover

Walther Lampe reports in issue 9/12 of the 1943 volume of the Lower Saxony magazine "Heimatland": "It was not until 1943 that the air raids were consciously concentrated on Hanover. The great daylight raid of July 26, 1943, took away the Marktkirchenturm, the Leineschloß, the beautiful Hoftheater and the old Cafe Kröpcke. Whose heart did not stand still at that time! On September 22 and 27, 1943, the heavy attacks followed, hitting the southern city, Grasdorf, Laatzen, Wülfel, Döhren, Liststadt and the northeastern suburbs, especially Langenhagen, Buchholz and Bothfeld.

As much as we cared about the fate of those who were most severely affected by these attacks and lost their lives and property, nothing touched our hearts and shook us to the core like the fourth major air raid on Hanover in October 1943. The evening of October 8, 1943 was one of the last beautiful, almost summery evenings. I was at the "Herdabend" of the Heimatbund Niedersachsen in the old traditional wine tavern of Ahle's son in the Mittelstraße. We left early because of the possible alarm, and I once again rode my bicycle in a very measured way down Calenberger Strasse with its magnificent half-timbered houses, especially the Vezinsdien and Wallmoden houses, turned into Rote Reihe with the deliciously harmonious building of the former British Hotel and the beautiful Neustädter Kirche, passed the houses Am Berge with the graceful house of Karl Philip Moritz, Goethe's friend, entwined with vine leaves. In all the most gracefully coordinated half-timbered houses with their flush windows the moon was reflected and threw back a peculiarly pale light. How I knew every old beautiful baroque door, every skylight, every well-shaped doorknob on these houses! To the left was the respectful precinct of the baroque Clemens Church. So I came to the Clevertor, enjoyed once again the stately Simon's Palace, Rosenberg's Villa with its beautiful park and the old half-timbered house of the Froebel School. Thus a good part of the old Hanover, with which thousands of memories were connected, passed by my eye once more, forever unforgettable.

At first there was a false alarm, then again after midnight. The planes seemed to fly over Hannover, were reported in Gardelegen and Stendal.

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det, suddenly turned, and what happened next filled everyone with horror. What was going on in the wide district of the city, especially in the old town, during those hours of terror, could only be guessed at. For everyone had to deal with himself, his own and his belongings, and was often completely on his own. But from the fact that one found oneself in front of an impenetrable ring of smoke, which barely showed the redness of the sky, but behind which a sea of fire raged, and from the fact that in the area where I lived the remains of the old traindepot on the Schneideberg were burning and the bales of stuff and wool were whirling around in the air like glowing bodies due to the suction, one could conclude that all hell had broken loose in the center of old Hanover.

At the first dawn - the city itself was wrapped in a heavy cloak of smoke, through which even the most beautiful and clearest autumn sun could not make its way - I set off again on my bike into the city. Up to the

Königsworther Platz I got through to some extent. From there, however, a picture of horror and complete destruction opened up. Not only that the former Königsulanen barracks had collapsed, the stately houses from the beginning of our century were ablaze, the Palm, the restaurant on the corner with its terrace was burning, no, on the street there was a tangle of rails, fallen wires, and roof tiles, overturned lanterns, torn open pavement, broken cornices of all kinds, that I could push my bike forward only with difficulty. I was met by a stream of people seeking the open air, with bag and baggage, with baby carriages, carts and other vehicles, some dressed only in coats and scarves, with pale, distraught, sorrowful faces, their hair disheveled, blackened by smoke and fire, here and there already bandaged. Men, women, old men and children, all dragged off with the last rescued belongings, some ragged, others in full state, women who had saved only the most precious coat, the fur. The people with suitcases, boxes and crates looked like traveling people.

I pushed my way through this tangle of people and objects only slowly. Everywhere there was fire. Some houses were already completely burned out inside, the rest charred. In others, the red rooster was just sitting on top of the roof. I sought out acquaintances in Gerberstraße. Here, the fire department's water hoses had been laid up to the top floor. I wanted to grab it, but they told me it was completely useless. So I moved on via Glocksestrasse and Humboldtstrasse, which looked completely devastated, to Dachenhausenstrasse. Most of the exterior of the Friederikenstift was still standing. But the beautiful house built by Laves, No. 2 in the same street, was only partially there. I hurried up the outside staircase into the open rooms of the first floor - a household that was familiar to me - still saved -141

some pewter vessels, personal pictures and odds and ends from the living room. I thought I could turn back to fill my hands again, but shortly after I left the house, the high beam above the door collapsed behind me, burning, and almost killed me. I stowed away what I had saved and hurried to the Neustadt market. There the building of the regional church office was brightly in flames and had already burned down to the mezzanine floor. The janitor and his family were sitting next to the salvaged belongings at the Duve fountain. The sons had reddened eyes from the fire. The fire department extinguished the fire with a full stream. I hoped that the cellar and mezzanine could still be saved, where a few days earlier valuable archival material had been collected for removal to storage. I cheered on the guards, who did their best, but here, too, everything was futile in the end. What memories were attached to this house!

So it went all around with all the half-timbered buildings of the beautiful old castle and deer pharmacy with its historically emmal facilities, the birthplace of Leisewitz - they were no more!

In the meantime it had become day. It was not possible to go inside the old town. The narrow streets were blocked by rubble and fire guards. Everywhere the same stinging, smoldering smell. I myself was blackened by the Zupakken, tired and shattered to death by the sympathy and the pain and the thought of the misery of the fellow men and the loss of all that one had loved in art and culture values! The heart began to petrify.

I kept to the outskirts of the old town, but there was nothing there either. One only dimly guessed the immense dimensions of the losses. Everything was still incomprehensible. I only saw in Friedrichstraße that the old half-timbered houses opposite the town hall were no longer standing, the Aegidienkirche had already burned out; the whole area up to the Aegidientorplatz was swept away, the Loccumer Hof as well. I hurried to the Wilhelm Busch House, on Georgsplatz. There, too, the night had already done its deed, it stood burning in the last remnants of the wall; likewise, my dear school building was completely hollowed out, the Schiller monument in front of it still intact. I looked into the Schiffgraben and discovered the house in which the Heimatbund Niedersachsen had its office. It, too, had been completely destroyed with its rich valuable material. The houses in Georgsstraße were gone, especially the beautiful old houses like those of Weitz and Lahmeyer. The Kröpcke clock stood lonely. And so it went on until the Steintor. Half of the passage was broken. At this corner the fire was blazing. Here, as everywhere else, it burned and flickered. One could literally taste the smoke that drifted over the corpse. Yes, it was still smoldering after 8 days. It was the same with the entire Lange Laube. One could always only say to oneself: "This too, so this too!" -142-

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The house of the fathers was no more, the Neustadt cemetery ransacked. So I reached again, with a little freer breath, the Herrenhäuser corridor. But inside me and outside of me was a desolation and sadness at the plight of

the people and the destruction of all that had stood and delighted us for centuries that was beyond description. It was too much of a pain. Like the coffin of a loved one that had been lowered into the ground, I looked back at the city on my way home. The sun did not break through the smoke and fumes during the whole day.

When I arrived home after much help and with bruised hands, acquaintances had already arrived who were on their way via Hanover but had had to leave the train at the gates of Hanover because the immediate traffic was blocked. Further acquaintances came, who found refuge with me, as long as I still remained in possession of a healthy apartment.

The question weighed heavily on the soul where the many inhabitants of the completely bombed-out houses had remained. Had they, with damp cloths around their heads and above all in front of their mouths and noses, and with their clothes completely dampened in order to be able to get safely through the embers, reached the open air in time? Had they escaped and been saved in the Maschwiesen, in the Ohe and Leineniederung and in the Georgengarten? Some could not make it, some were frozen in horror, miserably suffocated in the smoke or perished in the flames. I know how people felt safe in the cellar, but then were seized by the flames when the house burned out, clung to the bars of the cellar windows, which had not been properly filed through, and were cruelly burned there like living torches and charred beyond recognition. The remains were later buried on the lawns of the cemeteries, and there the relatives could recognize theirs only with difficulty by a chain or by other features.

How many families were torn apart for weeks and months! Some were picked up right at the gates of the city and packed onto wagons of all kinds and taken without connection to the next villages and healed cities. Nobody knew where the fate had taken him. He probably escaped death, but went towards a completely uncertain life, often literally stuck with nothing. He was no longer able to carry larger luggage, or it had been lost on the way. Some were barely clothed and had to be re-equipped from head to toe. It was only a long time later that those who had been scattered found themselves again and believed that they could get back into some sort of circumstances to be able to live on in a makeshift way."

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I will never forget

In the same booklet, a boy describes how he experienced Allied bombing:

"In the sky, luminous projectiles fly up, and all at once the darkness is filled with roaring guns. No longer able to use my senses, I reach for my coat, which is lying next to me. The mother yanks open the door, and I fall and stumble out, down the stairs. Will-o'-the-wisps flare up on the walls, the glow of exploding shells. My body is completely the tool of my incomprehensible fear.

I have reached the cellar, I fall down on my rest bed. I hear my mother's voice. I reflect. I feel safe with her. I see that I am only in my pajamas, and I get dressed. Down here the noises sound terrible. It is as if a mighty voice is bellowing through a funnel. Everything echoes in the vaults of the cellars: the whizzing and howling of the bombs, the humming of the planes, both drowned out by the angry thunder of the guns.

Father closes the heavy oak door. Inner restlessness rises up in me again. I want to console myself with my mother. She sits there, bent over, every eyebrow ready to rush toward me and protect me with her body. My eyes meet a shredded face. Seeking help, I look into the father's face: lips pressed together, eyes fixed on the door - the light goes out with a terrible blow. It is hell.

We hold each other tightly, no one speaks. The heavy door seems to be open: shrill clangs, dull thuds. The father feels for the heavy hammer and begins to break through the wall. We are helped from over there, and the need to live makes the father strong: there is a hole in the wall.

Here, too, lies the terrible darkness, permeated by whimpering, restrained sobbing. Someone is praying. Tightly the mother holds me to her. It does not want to end. Minutes seem hours to me. A man comes into the cellar.

"Everything is over, the planes are gone."

But what's thundering and roaring? - "It's exploding bombs and the roar of flames." We go out into the garden. Many people are standing, lying here, with few belongings saved. Flames bright as day illuminate the misery. There a young mother bent over her child, an old man lies there, dressed only in pants and shirt.

We look over the wall: between the trees of our garden the house rises, it seems intact. In wild joy we hurry through the cellar. The oak door is splintered from the lock. Up the street

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a figure lies stretched out on the steps of the open main door. An old woman. She does not want to come in. What fate may have driven her there? Finally we have her so far that she follows us.

Powerful storm has developed outside, driving sparks through the air. The heavy main door keeps threatening to fly open, for the lock is also broken. I stand against it. Through the grate, I see half-dressed people walking by outside, lit by flames, carrying their few belongings.

The parents go up to the upper floors. I am ashamed of the joy that our house is not destroyed. Am I more right than those outside? The mother comes crying, a bundle of bedclothes in her arms. "What is it?" "The fire is spreading!" It is a desperate cry.

I can no longer stop at the door. I hurry up the stairs. The house next door is on fire, we hadn't noticed. It spreads to our roof, and yet we cannot fight the strong element that seizes our house, we few. Water! - Too little!

It does not work! The upper rooms are already filled with smoke. Once again I want to see the places where I was happy and joyful. I hurried through the house: doors and windows were torn out. Cupboards are opened, books, linen rushed out. Decorations blow tattered to the outside. Pictures lie on the floor. The large mirror above the fireplace is smashed. Angel heads and stucco flowers lie on the ground. Devastation, destruction. - We can't save anything, everything must burn, we can't carry furniture, it must burn, because the staircase is blocked by debris. This or that light object, the most necessary, is dragged down, but that also stops.

There, the mother rushes into the smoke once more, we can't hold her. I stare at where she disappeared. Mother, come back! Come back! Minutes pass, to me it is an eternity. Mother! - She comes back, staggering. She has a cassette in her hand. I don't know what it is. Father supports her and we finally have to give way. For the last time we cross this threshold. How difficult this must be for the parents!

What do I feel? - Another shock hits me: a heart-rending scream comes to my ear. It comes from the flames. I can't understand a word, but it's in that voice: a burning one.

We land on the other side of the street. We settle down on a stone among weeping, despairing people. "God, save us from this distress!" - "There is no God. Would he allow this?"

And one shares with the other the last piece of bread.

"Come," says the father. One last look after the burning house, one last look. - -145-

We drag ourselves between the people and their last belongings. Sparks of fire fly around our heads. We pass through flaming streets, the cry of the burning resounds in my ears, and never will it die away. Never!"

Hanover was even still under heavy attack on March 25-28, 1945, with about 7,000 Hanoverians buried under the rubble of their city by Allied area bombing; Hanover's population had dropped from 472,200 to 217,000 by the end of the war.

The official protocols of the city administration speak a staggering language:

Dezernenten meeting of October 14, 1943 The first after October 9.

"The city building inspector reported that the question of the procurement of the coffins had now been solved. Originally he had ordered 3000 coffins through the carpenters' guild. Then however an order had come from above, according to which the procurement of the coffins was transferred to the funeral trade. For this purpose, 10,000 coffins were to be kept ready in the province. This obligation had not been kept. Through the Reichsinnungsverband des Tischlergewerbes, 600 coffins would be brought from the surrounding area by truck today; in addition, 2,000 coffins would arrive at the train station in Wülfel tomorrow through the agency of the Reichsstelle in Berlin. Femer were brought 100 coffins from Lage in Lippe and still further 500 pieces in order given.

... The senior government director announced that the Gauleiter had decided yesterday to have unidentified corpses continuously buried ... "

Department meeting of October 15

" ... The city building inspector reported that 240 coffins had arrived so far. He said that he had caused the M. company today to inquire again at the Reichswerke Hermann Göring about the 2000 coffins that were supposed to have been sent. In response to the question of the Leit. Reg. director how many bodies were still unburied, the reply was that it could be as many as 600.

The city medical council further informed that the number of seriously and severely injured could be assumed to be about 6000. Medicines and pharmaceutical articles were sufficiently available." -146-

Department meeting of October 17

" ... It was reported that 350 coffins had arrived in the meantime. A wagon had arrived in Langenhagen. In addition, 400 coffins were on their way from Magdeburg, so that tomorrow there would be enough coffins. The number of those killed in the last air raid had so far risen to 1002 ... "

Department meeting of October 18

" ... It should be determined how much housing in the city was destroyed. Estimates have so far varied between 50 and 60 per cent "

Departmental meeting of October 19 After a new attack on the evening of October 18.

"... The city building councilor stated that he had not yet been able to gain a complete overview. At Hanomag all sorts of things had been hit. In Linden and Limmer, as well as in the area of Königsworther Strasse and in the Herrenhausen district, a lot of new damage had occurred, among other things the pumping station on Königsworther Strasse, the Technical University, the castle in Herrenhausen had burned down, and the parking garage had also been destroyed. Furthermore, the Nordstadt Hospital and the Landesfrauenklinik were hit. In the Lister quarter, too, new destruction had occurred. Isernhagen and Langenhagen were hit again. The old people's and nursing home in Langenhagen was particularly badly affected.

... Everything there was destroyed except for House I; even the kitchen was no longer there. During the last attack there had been four dead; at the moment there were 210 homeless people in the home, but they were to be taken away this evening. He needed two trucks immediately and probably four tomorrow....

... Councilman Seh, reported that out of 233 Bäckerelen 111 failed;

44 of 140 slaughterhouses had failed. A lot of livestock had been killed in the Hanover area. It was necessary to see that this livestock was brought to the slaughterhouse if possible."

In the consultation with the councilors on October 26.

"Most of the hospitals had been destroyed.... In the first period after the air raid of October 8/9, the burial of the fallen had been difficult....

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difficulties. In the meantime, however, so many coffins had been received that all the fallen could have been buried. The exact number of the fallen has not yet been determined. So far, 1162 dead have been reported. 1500 fallen have been buried in the municipal cemeteries so far. Unfortunately, it must be assumed that there are still people buried under the rubble.

Death by suffocation From October 22, 1943, Kassel was attacked. The dead of the city had to be taken by 45 trucks to the mass graves, which were dug by excavators. The police chief's report stated, among other things:

"The cause of death was determined to be death by suffocation in 70%;

In 15% death by external force; in 15% charred recovered, the actual cause of death could no longer be determined."

The dead had to be buried in two layers on top of each other, as there was not enough space left.

Darmstadt was destroyed on the night of September 11-12, 1944. The number of those burned here is estimated at 12,000 to 15,000.

The "Darmstädter Tagblatt" brought on February 26, 1964 a documentation about the causes, which led in particular to the bombing of Darmstadt. Professor Dr. Alwin Walther, head of the Institute for Practical Mathematics at the Technical University of Darmstadt, gave a speech at the annual meeting of the Association of Friends of the Technical University of Darmstadt as early as 1962 in which he dealt with the reasons that led to the attack on Darmstadt. Professor Dr. Walther said:

"After the war, a rumor arose that the devastating bombing raid on Darmstadt had been caused by the activities of the Peenemünde College. This assumption was not confirmed by the Royal Airforce, which had carried out the attack, when asked. According to the reply, the attack was rather part of a systematic bombing of the rear to support the British Arnhem-Nymwegen offensive by parachute troops to force the crossing of the Rhine."

The "Darmstädter Tagblatt" also brought clarification in the number how the plan for the air raid on Darmstadt came about:

"Taped and preserved by British writer and military historian David J. Irving is a telephone conversation with Squadron Commodore M. K. Sewell at 10 Padwick Road, Danehurst Park, Horsham, Sussex. This conversation, held on October 2, 1962, and dealing mainly with the bombing of Dresden, also addresses the question of why the air raid on Darmstadt occurred.

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The squadron commodore reports that in 1944 he lived in a house that also housed fugitive victims of the Nazi regime. "They had come here before 1938. They asked me one day why we had not bombed Darmstadt."

Irving: "Was that because of the V-2 work?"

Sewell: "No, no, it meant the normal city; they had thought they could find out what was going on there, and I was in the Air Ministry at the time for bomber tactics; I mentioned to one of the target selection committee people: Why haven't we bombed Darmstadt yet? - He replied: we don't know anything about there! - So I went back to my neighbors and learned from them that - at least in 1938 - a lot of preparations were made for the production of optical devices - submarine optics - and such things - lenses. I passed this information on to the Air Ministry; and within a couple of months the attack was set.... ."

Pforzheim was even attacked as late as February 23, 1945.

On February 23, 1960, the "Pforzheimer Zeitung" published a report on those gruesome 22 minutes in which 17,000 Pforzheimers were murdered.

"The attack, which began at 7:48 p.m. on February 23, 1945, was preceded by a day, as they usually were at that time. Since the early morning there was air danger, which from time to time changed into "acute air danger", became "pre-warning" and only in the early evening hours became "all-clear". So, thank God, thousands of working people were able to leave the factories and the trains and omnibuses were able to take the out-of-towners out of the city. Mostly during the day single planes circled over the city, in the afternoon it was overflown by a small unit in east-west direction, bombs did not fall.

Then the dreaded cuckoo call sounded on the radio. The arrival of some airplanes from the Hagenau area, then of a small group with flight direction Stuttgart was reported. A "public air warning" was given. When strong formations were also announced with flight direction Stuttgart, the siren "Acute air danger" sounded shortly after 19:45. Strong engine noise of individual airplanes, which marked out the attack area by "Christ trees", became audible. Then, at about 7:50 p.m., the large-scale attack took place, in which more than 17,000 defenseless people met their deaths, and countless numbers became cripples, orphans, homeless and beggars. The annihilation was flown in from the east in several waves by 368 British Air Force planes, 361 Lancasters and 7 Mosquitos had taken off from airfields in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and East Anglia.

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Air mines, explosive bombs and incendiary bombs, phosphorus canisters, flame bombs with a total weight of about 1575 tons were dropped on Pforzheim for 22 minutes. Among them were 330 air mines or explosive bombs of 36 hundredweight each. The data on the number and type of bombers flown in, on the launching sites, on the weight of the dropped explosive and incendiary masses are based on a communication from the British Air Ministry. The first explosive bomb fell in the gasworks area. Then, for a length of three kilometers, not one stone was left upon another. The incendiary bombs were scattered far and wide, so that even many houses that were in themselves remote burned down. The settlements on the outskirts of the city, especially in the north and west, were spared. A huge conflagration developed, which became a fire hurricane. It reached its peak after only ten minutes. It is indicative of its violence that in Stuttgart-Degerloch, for example, letterheads of a Pforzheim doctor were found. The people who did not lose their lives in the hail of bombs, suffocated in the cellars or in their flight through the sea of fire. Few were able to escape from the city center to the Enz River. Some succeeded, but there they were threatened with death by the unleashed waters of the damaged Nonnemühlwehr. During the attack, it was impossible to think of providing assistance. Even immediately afterwards, no systematic internal fighting could be carried out. No extinguishing water was available, and the use of fire engines was not possible, since debris two to three meters high covered all the roads. Extinguishing had to be limited to the outskirts of the city.

The Wehrmacht report of February 24, 1945, briefly stated what had happened: "In the early evening hours a heavy British attack was directed against Pforzheim."

In a population balance sheet for the years 1939 and 1945 drawn up by the Statistical Office, the individual

districts are compared with each other. In 1939, for example, 4112 people were listed in the Marktplatz district, while in 1945 no one lived there at all. In the quarter Altstadt 5109 persons, in contrast to 1945 two persons. In the Leopoldplatz quarter 4416, in 1945 thirteen. In the Sedan quarter 4220, in 1945 against it 582 persons. The population of the city in 1939 totaled 79 011 people, in 1945 still 42 226 people."

Even when the war was visibly decided, there was ruthless bombing of Welter. Not only on the Rhine and in the West, three quarters of Würzburg was destroyed on the night of March 17-18, Hildesheim on March 22, Nordhausen on the night of April 3-4, Potsdam on April 14. It was not until April 26 that the bomber command was instructed to cease strategic bombing.

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But before that, from February 13 to 14, 1945, the funeral pyre was erected in Dresden. What happened here is practically indescribable. In this city, where hundreds of thousands of refugees from the East crowded with their treks, by horse and wagon, where hundreds of thousands of the wounded had been taken to the military hospitals, Allied cruelty surpassed itself. The city burned for seven days and seven nights. Axel Rodenberger, in his account of the dying of a city, "The Death of Dresden," described how they tried to cope with the mountains of corpses:

"Opposite the Renner department store, grates made of iron girders were erected. They rose half a meter above the ground, crematoria under the open sky.

The dead were laid on top of each other. One layer after the other, just as they were brought in.

How little space a dead person takes up! Hundreds were piled into heaps. A funeral pyre contained 450 to 500 people. It seems to be much less.

Each layer was soaked with gasoline. Fuel lay under the grates. A match, a tiny little match, lit the fire. And then the flames blazed up.

All those now unrecognizable people had also had their fate and lived their lives. Randomly they lay on top of each other. Soldiers in scraps of uniform - in how many battles might they have stood their ground? Men in once elegant clothes that still betrayed the first-class tailor. Surely fate had meant well with them so far. Old men and women! Sunshine and gloomy clouds will have been their companions. Simple women, blond girls, men in work clothes, boys in short pants, girls with long braids, toddlers, babies.

Almost cautiously, the children were lifted up by rough fists and placed with the adults. The sight of them shocked everyone, no matter whether they were members of an enemy nation or Germans. Death, the merciless death, had grabbed indiscriminately. He had not asked when he took the lives, whether young or old, whether they were completed or unfinished. Death and the bombs had harvested mercilessly. A sad, a terrible harvest. Now they were all, without distinction of person, class or caste, united in death. At the same hour they had suffered, and at the same hour they went up together in flames and smoke.

Hardly had they met in life, and now they lay silent and close together. No flower would ever adorn their grave, no relative could weep at their graves.

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Helmet-returning men will search for their wives and children among the rubble of Dresden. Children their parents, mothers waiting in vain for the return of their sons.

Dresden, the mass grave of countless refugees, will never be able to reveal the number and anonymity of its dead. Generations were wiped out, fled inhabitants of entire villages surprised by death. No relatives -will ask about them, because they too are among the victims.

The pyres blazed day and night. For miles, the smell of burning flesh and burning clothes could be smelled. Mounds of bone remains and ash piled up.

One could enter the city only with a gas mask or with a wet cloth in front of the mouth and nose. The sweet penetrating smell produced nausea and vomiting.

The flames blazed without interruption day and night and night and day. And they always found new food. There was no end to the feeds.

The German task forces were constantly being relieved. The limits of what was bearable, what was reasonable, were far exceeded."

Cynically, British Lieutenant General C. M. Grierson told a press conference at the Supreme Headquarters of the

Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe in Paris on February 17, 1945:

"The chiefs of the Allied air forces have finally made the long-awaited decision that ruthless terror bombing of the major German population centers will be carried out, thus sealing Hitler's fate more quickly."

The crime of Allied air murder could not be admitted more openly!

Of course, there were also men in England in those fateful years who opposed this criminal area bombing of German residential areas with all their means. These were above all Bishop Bell of Chichester and the member of the House of Commons of the Labour Party Richard Raper Stokes, who, however, could not assert themselves against the tactics of Mr. Lindeman and in particular against Prime Minister Churchill and Air Marshal Harris.

With the mass murder in Dresden, however, the limit of the crime was reached. Only the BBC, in its 6 p.m. news broadcast on February 14, 1945, acknowledged the destruction of Dresden with the following wording:

"British and American bombers conducted last night.

-152- and that morning one of those heavy blows against central Germany which the Allied leaders promised the Russians at Yalta. During the night, the RAF sent 800 planes to Dresden, the capital of Saxony, which is in front of the front section of the attacking Russian forces of Marshal Konyev. It was the first heavy attack of the Bomber Command on this large industrial city. Fires of devastating concentration were caused in the center of the city." Curiously, to this day, this BBC report represents the only official British statement on the destruction of Dresden.

One owes to the already quoted British historian Irving the knowledge that even Marshal Harris was puzzled about the order to destroy Dresden. He gave his deputy, Marshal Sir Robert Saundby, the task of determining why Dresden was suddenly so important. But Saundby could only report that the Abwehrabteilung knew nothing about Dresden except that Dresden was currently overcrowded with hundreds of thousands of refugees from the East.

On the basis of this news, Harris called the Air Ministry and demanded information as to why Dresden was to be bombed.

When he put the phone down, he told Marshal Saundby, "Churchill himself gave the order."

When Harris then also contacted Prime Minister Churchill, the latter explicitly confirmed the order and explained that he had to demonstrate to the Soviets British willingness to help, but at the same time Anglo-American strength.

U.S. Maj. Gen. Edmund B. Hill, in Moscow as head of the Air Division of the American Military Mission, officially informed the Soviet General Staff that the 8th American Bomber Fleet would attack Dresden.

Before the pilots and their commanders departed, Marshal Harris stated dryly, "Tonight we will attack Dresden, gentlemen, I can see no reason for this attack myself, but it has been ordered to me with the highest degree of urgency."

The official "History of the Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany" denies that the Soviets had asked Churchill to destroy Dresden. It coolly states in the official British account: "No evidence has come to light that the Russians specifically requested the bombing of Dresden."

So the only thing that is certain with historical certainty is that the hundreds of thousands of Dresden had to die because Churchill gave the order to bomb the city.

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A few weeks later, with the end of the war already around the corner, Churchill was quick to place the responsibility of this Dresden mass murder on the Royal Airforce, writing in a memorandum to Air Marshal Sir Charles Portal on March 23, 1945:

"The destruction of Dresden remains a serious question mark in Allied bombing policy. It seems to me that the moment has come when the question of air raids on German cities, which serve only to increase terror when we also make use of other pretexts, should be reviewed." This was too much even for Air Marshal Portal. He categorically demanded that Churchill, on whose express orders the whole air attack on German civilians in general and on Dresden in particular had been carried out, withdraw this unreasonable memorandum. In response, Churchill did indeed silently withdraw the memorandum.

Mr. R. Crossman, chief of political warfare against Germany during the war, wrote of Dresden in the New Statesman on May 3, 1963: "This destruction of Dresden was one of those crimes against humanity whose perpetrators would have been tried at Nuremberg had not that court been twisted into a mere instrument of Allied vengeance."

When Allied area bombing of German cities ceased, more than 13 million Germans had been made homeless by Allied air raids. Berlin lost 43% of its housing; Hamburg 53.5%; Essen 50.5%; Düsseldorf 50.9%; Bremen 51.6 %; Cologne 70%; Duisburg 64%; Darmstadt 61.6 %; Dortmund 66%. The city of Hamburg may be cited as an illustration of the destruction. It alone suffered twice as many casualties as the entire Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71 had claimed.

Nevertheless, this gigantic destruction did not fulfill the expectations of its diabolical inventor, Mr. Lindeman. The British scientist C. P. Snow reported briefly on this: "The recording of the bomb damage after the war brought to light that it was only one tenth of Lindeman's estimate."

In essence, the German war machine was not affected by this, but the German mothers and German children were.

To Snow we owe also the only clue to the personality of the inventor of this mass murder, Lindeman: "It seems that until today nobody knows what nationality his father had. He could have been German or Alsatian. It is also possible that he was Jewish, but I doubt it." -154-

When Churchill had to step down from the political stage in 1945, Lindeman's hour had also come. He retired to his chair at Oxford.

Since the gruesome work was done, no one wanted to bear the responsibility, indeed, the attempt to distance himself went so far that Marshal Harris was not even included in the official war honors list.

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Assassination from France to Greece Partisans created the Criminal War

Partisan gangs were by no means confined to the Soviet Union. Partisan groups, which were almost exclusively led by communists or at least directed by them, operated above all in the Balkans, but also in France and Italy. This war of murder ingeniously provoked anew those German retaliatory measures that everyone still talks about today. But the murdered Landser, whose mostly agonizing deaths were the prerequisite for the German retaliatory actions, are hushed up. A few examples of this murder war in France:

In February 1944, Major of the Order Police W. fell wounded into the hands of terrorists near Pontarlier south of Saone and was killed by shot in the neck.

On May 10, 1944, three German railroad workers were killed by shot in the neck at Decazeville.

On June 1, 1944, several German soldiers and two German railwaymen were found shot dead in Figeac (Toulouse region).

On June 6, 1944, a German soldier was killed by shot in the neck in Capdenac.

Around the same time, at the Mussidan station (Dordogne), sixteen midshipmen of the La Courtine Air Force Ground Combat School were ambushed and fourteen of them were killed; their bodies were "most cruelly mutilated and desecrated

On June 9, German troops recapturing the town of Tülle found the bodies of 40 German soldiers with their skulls bashed in and their eyes gouged out. According to eyewitnesses, the partisans had driven over the still-living German soldiers with heavy trucks and mutilated them beyond recognition. One dead man was found to have had both heels pierced and a rope pulled through the holes. Apparently he had been dragged to death in this catfish fashion. Many of the dead were found to have up to six bullet holes through the soles of their feet. The companions of the murderers had sullied the corpses, some of which could not even be identified because of the almost unbelievable mutilations. In addition, 12 German soldiers had been shot by the partisans at the cemetery wall of Tülle.

The next day, in a grove near Naves, ten kilometers

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north of Tülle, another 62 dead German soldiers were found, including medics and railwaymen, who had been shot in the neck by the partisans.

Rudolf Krachmer describes below how the French partisans treated German prisoners: "As a non-commissioned officer and radio squad leader, I belonged to the Corps Intelligence Division 466. During the retreat fighting in France, I and my radio squad were assigned to Colonel Krappmann's combat group in Chatillon/ Seine. The entire Kampfgruppe fell into captivity with the Chatillon partisans on September 10, 1944, and was housed in the

Chatillon aircraft hangar as a temporary prison camp, and two weeks later in former German Wehrmacht barracks on the banks of the Seine. The leader of that partisan detachment was a certain Barras (or Barres) from Chatillon, liquor and sparkling water manufacturer, who had to be addressed as "Lieutenant Colonel".

On September 18 or thereabouts, on the orders of this partisan leader and in his presence, about 55 prisoners, including the wounded Colonel Krappmann, two captains, a first lieutenant, a lieutenant (field gendarmerie), staff sergeants, first sergeants, sergeants, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men, were separated out and taken away, ostensibly to a punishment camp. Two weeks later I learned from the mayor of the village of Asniere-en-Montagne, where I worked for a farmer, that 50 Allemands had been shot in Chatillon. I received confirmation of this from comrades who had remained in the camp. One of the murdered captains had been forced a few days earlier to shoot a comrade, who had escaped and been recaptured, with a submachine gun before our eyes.

The senior staff doctor of the former combat group Krappmann burned hidden money in the officers' barracks at the beginning of October. He was observed by a sentry who reported it to the camp commander, a French sergeant. He immediately came into the barracks, examined the stove, ordered the medical officer to come out, placed him in front of one of the bank trees and shot him with his pistol in front of our comrades.

A sergeant who belonged to a labor detachment in the village of St. Vio-let near Chatillon made a remark to a harassing farmer that the Germans would soon return and that he would then be called to account. The farmer drove to Ch. and reported this remark to the aforementioned camp commander. The commander went to the village the next day, confronted the sergeant and then shot him in the farmer's yard in the presence of the five other comrades.

The former adju- -157-, who worked as an interpreter and labor distributor in the camp, was a member of the

tant of the Kampfgruppe, First Lieutenant May, should be able to provide information on this, if he is still alive. Witness to the shooting of the Oberstabsarzt was the current finance officer Erwin Gaber."

In Italy, the partisan struggle began with the landing of Allied troops, especially after the fall of Benito Mussolini. However, the operations were militarily insignificant until the beginning of June 1944, even if hundreds of German and Italian soldiers fell victim to the assassination attempts. Only the call of the traitor marshal Badoglio, countersigned by the British field marshal Alexander and announced at this time over the Allied radio stations, caused the partisan struggle to flare up in Italy as well.

This call stated, among other things: "Attack the command posts and the small military centers! Kill the Germans from behind so that you can evade the counter-attack in order to be able to kill others again."

The British historian F. J. P. Veale describes the situation at that time in his work "Towards Barbarism" as follows:

"As the likelihood of German defeat became a certainty, the initially timid response to these appeals quickly intensified. Apparently, however, it came less from Badoglio's supporters than from rare Italian Communist ones. Thousands of German soldiers were stabbed or shot in ambush, fell victim to bombs or land mines. The Italian partisans adopted all the lore of the hallowed methods of the Spanish snipers in their fight against Napoleon's armies. To these were added innovations, such as traps made of the severed heads of murdered prisoners placed on stakes, which, when touched, triggered a hidden landmine."

Field Marshal Albert Kesselring wrote about this from the German side in his book "Soldier to the Last Day":

"The individuality could let off steam, the southern temperament did its part. Where the exaggeratedly constructed "patriotic task" still allowed inhibitions to exist, the criminal instincts of the criminals knew how to assert themselves to a large extent in such a group. Thus, the despicable, underhanded warfare could celebrate orgies, to which the structure of the Italian area virtually lent itself. In small groups or individually, the gangs raged without restraint; they carried out their shady activities everywhere, in the mountains as well as in the Po Valley, in the woods as well as on the streets and at night or in the fog - but never openly. To these groups can be attributed, in the main, the many acts of sabotage of Wehrmacht installations, camps, railroads, roads, bridges, communications installations, and the equally frequent crimes of cruelty against humanity. There are in the scale from the insidious- -158-

There are no cases of shooting, hanging, drowning, burning, freezing, crucifixion, torture of any kind, assassinations of individuals and communities, or poisoning of wells, that have not occurred once or many times, or even continuously. The recurring abuse of the "Red Cross" must be emphasized here.

This was facilitated by the fact that the gang members almost universally wore no insignia and concealed their weapons, or even used German or fascist uniforms in violation of international law. The obligatory "uni-form" was missing.

All this created considerable unrest on the German side, since the German soldier in the "gang-occupied" zones had to suspect a fanatical assassin in every civilian of both sexes and could be shot at from every house. In addition, the scouting and alarm service was carried out with the cooperation or acquiescence of the entire population, which made the constant endangerment of the German soldier possible in the first place.

The bandits only engaged in open combat in very rare exceptional cases; if they had accomplished their treacherous task from ambush or if they had to break off the fight due to the feeling of inferiority, they disappeared as citizens among the citizens, or as harmless 'forest runners' in the terrain."

Ambushes multiplied. Thanks to the constant inciting encouragement of Marshal Badoglio and his advisor Colonel Count Montezemolo, the partisan bands grew to about 100,000 men.

Based on the reports of the army groups, 5000 dead and about 30,000 wounded and displaced persons fell victim to them in Italy from June to August 1944 alone.

The most terrible and inhuman form of guerrilla warfare ever was achieved in Yugoslavia. Here Tito, together with the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, had organized the first murder and sabotage raids at the very moment when the German-Soviet war broke out. On July 7, 1941, Tito proclaimed the underground war against the German troops and the anti-communist Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. Tito very quickly succeeded in eclipsing the white partisans, who were also fighting the Germans here with the royalist Serbs under Draza Mihailovic, and thanks to the support of the British Empire in particular, he finally took over the murder campaign against the Germans in the Balkans.

The following affidavits of former soldiers and officers provide a deep insight into the methods of the Tito partisans. Most of these statements were made before Allied military tribunals in the course of trials of German army commanders.

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Johann Kerbler, on November 8, 1947:

"I belonged to A. N. R. 521, which was deployed after the end of the Balkan campaign to repair and maintain the telephone network in Yugoslavia. Disruptive detachments of one NCO and 6 men were distributed at a distance of 50 km each on the Belgrade - Nis line. On 29. 9. 1944 the disruptive detachment was attacked and abducted by partisans in Usce. Since search operations by 2 infantry units were unsuccessful, our company formed a search detachment consisting of the company commander, a lieutenant, the sergeant major and 42 men. On October 2, at 5 a.m. we left Belgrade, divided into three trucks and two heavy Horch bucket trucks. Shortly after 11 o'clock we carry out Topola. About 15 km after Topola in the direction of Kragujevac the road went uphill in serpentine. The road was very confusing, surrounded by corn fields on the left and bushes and forests on the right. In the first car sat the Komp.-Chef, the Lt., the Hptfw. and the driver, then followed the first truck, on which I sat with 12 comrades. Then came the two other trucks, and the end was again a Horch bucket truck. We had a curve behind us, when a shot from the left fell out of the cornfield. After about 5 seconds, heavy machine gun and rifle fire suddenly started from both sides of the road. Our driver abandoned the car and drove into the right ditch. Bullet shells pierced the sides of the car. I suddenly felt a burning sensation in my back. Next to me, a comrade collapsed, hit by bullets. Others did not move. I tried to jump down over the rear side of the ship, but was shot in the right upper arm. Thus I was incapacitated from the beginning. The other comrades who were able to leave the car opened fire on the partisans and shot to the last cartridge. In the meantime, under cover of their machine-gun fire, the partisans had worked their way so far that it was easy for them to capture the remaining survivors. Since I could not walk, I was wrapped in a blanket and carried down a mountain slope by 4 comrades. The partisans led us to a clearing through which a stream flowed. We had to sit down in the grass on the other side of the stream, we were only 14 men strong. On the other side, on the embankment, the partisans were busy dividing the valuables taken from us and from the fallen. On the order of a captain in Serbian uniform, who had apparently led the whole raid, the partisans left the clearing except for two and the captain. The two partisans loaded two l. MG and brought them into position. The barrel muzzle pointed at us. Thus everyone knew what was in store for us. Our company commander, who was also captured, stepped forward to the embankment and made the serbi-

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Captain, he proposed to exchange us for captured partisans in Belgrade. One of our men was to go to Belgrade with several Serbs as guards. The Serbian captain, however, did not accept this proposal, even when the company commander gave him his word of honor that he would get 140 partisans released for us 14 men. When the company commander wanted to continue speaking, he was driven back down the embankment to his seat at gunpoint. As he sat next to us, the two partisans took up their machine guns at a wave from the gang leader. Our Komp. chief told us to keep quiet, it would pass quickly. At a distance of barely 4 meters, the two brought the machine guns to bear on us and pulled the trigger. I let myself fall backwards. Between the barking and hammering of the machine gun barbs sounded the increasingly loud screams of the hit comrades. Bullets whirled past my head. Suddenly I felt a hard blow on my right hip and felt the blood run warmly down my thigh. The sergeant major was lying close to me, and I felt him wince when he was hit by a bullet. I was fully conscious and saw my comrades writhing and writhing in pain. When the partisans had emptied the magazines, they came down the embankment, went from man to man and put the pistols to the temples of those who were still moving. I was the last in line. It is not possible for me to describe the feeling I had at that time, when the sergeant's head was jerked around, the barrel of the pistol lowered, a shot cracked and the sergeant's face suddenly fell into the grass beside me, covered with blood. The fear of death crept higher and higher in me, and I thought my heart was standing still. Then I felt a hard kick on my outer heel. With my last willpower I held myself rigid. The partisans thought I was dead and moved away. Only after some time in the tent, after I had recovered somewhat, did I drag myself up to the road. The other 13 comrades were dead. I had three gunshot wounds in my back, the upper arm puncture and a hand grenade shrapnel wound in my spine. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon an infantry company arrived from Kragujevac, which, after searching the area, took me to the war hospital in Kragujevac. From there I was taken to Belgrade by Fieseler-Storch."

Professor Dr. Eberhard Tangi, on August 22, 1947:

Around August 1941, near the village of Skela, west of Belgrade, a construction crew of an intelligence unit of about 20 men was ambushed and overpowered. The captured German soldiers were cut down. A non-commissioned officer, a photo officer in my unit, photographed the corpses according to the instructions of the military commission in charge of the investigation -161-

graphic. I have seen the pictures. In addition to many injuries, the corpses also showed gruesome mutilations. In consideration of the grisliness of the pictures, publication was refrained from."

Theodor Jestrabek, on August 11, 1947:

"In September 1941, 3 soldiers of my group, namely: private Strelka, private and motorman Glaser, both from Vienna, and private Wagner from the Sudetenland, were put on the march from Athens to Belgrade in a truck with the order to receive rations for the staff AOK 12 and to bring them to Athens. The truck with 3 soldiers did not return. After months of searching through the district and local commandantates involved in Serbia, a report from the Kragujevac district commandantate reached my office in Thessaloniki, where the staff had been transferred in the meantime, around the middle of 1942 with the following content:

The truck loaded in Belgrade according to the order with the above-mentioned 3 soldiers had set out from Belgrade in September 1941 in the direction of Kragujevac. Due to the already existing partisan danger, the truck joined an ambulance transport detachment. Near Kragujevac the column was attacked by partisans, a part was blown off, and according to the report of eyewitnesses who managed to get through during the fight, a total of 21 men, including my 3 soldiers, were overpowered, captured by the partisans and carried off. After weeks of wandering, 20 men, including a senior doctor and my 3 men, were finally stripped to the shirt, had to dig their own graves, and were shot by the partisans. One of the captured German soldiers managed to escape just before the execution. On the basis of the information he gave to the commandant's office, a German detachment later found the place of execution and the graves, identified the bodies perfectly, and buried them in the Heroes' Cemetery near Kragujevac."

Dr. Fritz Voigt, on August 1, 1947

"Several times I witnessed atrocities committed by the partisans. Around July 1943, a train on the Paracin-Zajecar line was stopped by a group of partisans and all the German soldiers and Russian factory guards on board

were taken out. The majority of them were cruelly mutilated (genitals torn out, faces smashed). On 31. 10. 1944 Essenholer and sick bearers of mine and the 15th Company of Jag. Reg. 724 were ambushed and captured by members of the I. Proletarian Liberation Brigade near Cacak. A few days later we found the bodies of the prisoners in the partisan position. It was obvious from the corpses that the prisoners had been tremendously tortured. They were so battered that we had great difficulty in identifying them."

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Walter Meyer-Hübner, Captain (ret.)
former commander of II./A.R. 236 (162.1. D.)
on 28.7.1947

"I remember the bestial murder of a German soldier of my division near the Pribic monastery (Karstadt - Ljubljana area), whose body we later found mutilated in the cruelest way (eyes gouged out, nose and tongue cut off and massacred with countless dagger stabs). There is a 99% probability that two other comrades who were assaulted with him were killed in the same way, but we did not find their bodies. We found the said partisan victim buried in a vineyard 2 or 3 days later. The incident was as follows: The III./I. R. 303 had crossed a village on a bump in the road without having had contact with the enemy. The forward observer of my I. battery could not proceed immediately, since he received orders from the fire position to dismantle the telephone line. A troubleshooter who was sent from the fire position to the V. B. or who wanted to return to his V. B. from a troubleshooting mission witnessed a cruelly deceitful ambush as he approached unseen under cover of a group of bushes.

20 to 30 armed men suddenly, as if on signal, left several houses that were in the immediate vicinity of the last location of the V. B., and took the unsuspecting German soldiers by surprise. The witness heard single shots and then only horrible screams of the victims. Powerless to help his comrades, he watched the proceedings, taking cover;

breathless with horror, he then arrived at his battery's firing position a few hours later and reported the incident." (The murdered man was NCO Lohmann of I./A. R. 236.)

Kurt Engelschall, on December 22, 1947

"I still remember today that in the area of the 173rd Reserve Division an officer was taken out of a railroad train, murdered, stripped naked and mutilated. According to my memory today, this officer's testicles were cut off."

Gottfried Annuss, Lieutenant Colonel (ret.)
on September 20, 1947:

"At the beginning of our enterprise to clean up Lika at the beginning of September 1943, there was a raid on a telephone construction squad of our division in the area SO Bihac, during which the bodies of the fallen soldiers were cruelly mutilated. During the change of position of the division staff, I saw these victims myself the following day."

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Karl Winkelbrandt reported on the same day:

"The cruelty of the gangs' fighting methods was unimaginable by our standards. At the Cazin operation in the summer of 1944, bodies of German soldiers were found, killed after being wounded by butt blows to the back of the head, completely stripped of their clothes and robbed of all their valuables. Near Bugojno, in the summer of 1943, a Croatian member of the division who had wandered away from the troops was found a few hours later mutilated in the ugliest way, by opening up the abdominal wall and peeling off the skin."

Gerhard Volkert, on September 16, 1947:

"Frequently, military hospitals and hospital trains were attacked, ambulances were shot at, fallen and seriously wounded German soldiers, as well as Croats, were robbed of their uniforms and personal belongings and mutilated by cutting off their ears, noses, fingers, or genitals."

Adolf Schmitzhübsch, Oberleutnant a. D. (Jäger-Regiment 721)
on September 22, 1947

"I was able to gain an insight into the inhuman fighting methods of the gangs during my temporary function as the regiment's funeral officer. As such, I saw at least 30 corpses of German soldiers who had apparently been mutilated in the most gruesome manner before being murdered (ears cut off, eyes gouged out, killed by slow burning, buried alive, sharpened stakes rammed into the abdomen and anus, etc.). Robbed was every captured and fallen German soldier. The Red Cross was not respected by the bandits; I myself witnessed raids on ambulances, dressing stations, and wound transport planes."

Otto Witscher, Captain (ret.) on September 18, 1947:

"On the occasion of the raid on Banja Luka on New Year's Eve 1943/44, a man from my company was sick with flu in the infirmary in Banja Luka. All the inmates of the infirmary were taken from their beds by the gangs and shot in an adjoining yard except for one, who played dead after receiving a wound and was freed shortly thereafter. I was able to see the interrogation of this man myself at the time."

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**Hermann Wissmann (Gebirgsjäger-Feldersatzbataillon 79)
on October 8, 1947**

"Early on October 8, 1944, I made a break for the west. In the process, over 300 severely wounded were loaded onto 20 trucks. These left the city behind the attack group. I myself took the rear guard and followed behind the severely wounded. Due to heavy enemy fire on the breakout site, several trucks were hit and got stuck on the road as an obstacle for the following trucks. The latter met a bitter fate, for a gap opened up behind the attacking front, into which the enemy immediately forced their way. The dense fog obscured these events. By the time I arrived, half an hour later, the enemy had acted inhumanely toward the seriously wounded. One German soldier, for example, lay stripped naked in a truck with his hands pinned to the floor of it. He was already severely wounded and probably died as a result of this maltreatment. As a result of the battle, I was unable to ascertain further details. But similar atrocities were reported to me by various soldiers that day."

Former Private Otto Frankenreuther (Sicherungs-Bataillon 812) writes:

"On 24.2.1944 a security detachment of the 1. Company in strength of one officer and 7 men was surrounded by partisans, captured, disarmed, stripped to the shirt and then killed by shots in the head. The officer was abducted and could not be found. I buried the bodies of my comrades with him.

At the end of June of the same year a wooden detachment of the 2nd Company was attacked by partisans in a cornfield near Mitrowitz. All members of the commando were murdered, partly by splitting their heads.

I helped bury the bodies of my comrades and they lie in the military cemetery in Mitrowitz."

**Former NCO Otto Lips (Panzergranadier Brigade 92)
on September 18, 1947**

"During the withdrawal of the last battle groups from the Belgrade - Sme-derevo area (1. Gebirgs-Div., parts Div. Brandenburg, SS-Div. "Prinz Eugen", Panz. Gren. Brigade 92, etc.) in mid-October 1944 in the direction of Belgrade, we found about 20 corpses of German soldiers lying in a row next to each other on the retreat road about 20 km south of Belgrade. They were completely undressed, without identifying marks, and had apparently been slain from the front. (Remnants of German uniforms lay a few meters away). Their skulls and faces had been smashed. Since during the retreat we were constantly hit by

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Tito partisans were pursued and attacked, it can be assumed that the murders were carried out by them. Those killed were apparently members of a German supply column coming from Belgrade on the march south. The bodies could not be identified."

Volume I/1 "The German Prisoners of War in Yugoslavia 1945 to 1949," published by the Scientific Commission of German Prisoners of War of World War II in Munich, also reports on the partisan struggle in the Balkans:

"Similar incidents also occurred in Albania and Greece. In his affidavit of 13. 6. 1947, the former commander of the 100th Jäger Division reports, among other things (American Military Tribunal No. V, Document Book II for v. Weichs, Document No. W 614, page 4 ff):

In the fall and winter, beginning shortly after the German invasion of Albania, the following type of roadside

raids by Albanian communist partisans were the order of the day: motor vehicles traveling alone or in pairs were brought to a halt, either by children standing in the middle of the road and waving, or by obstacles (tree trunks and the like), or by shots into the engine. The occupants were then forced to get out, led aside into the bushes, stripped completely naked there, and then killed by shooting them in the neck. The partisans put on the stolen clothes. They carried the luggage away with them. This procedure was repeated almost daily for months on different streets.

An engineer lieutenant of my division, named W. or similar, was ambushed and captured while reconnoitering a trail in September 1943, about 15 km southwest of El-basan. He was given the alternative by the partisans of making himself available to the gangs as a guide or dying. He declared that he was a German officer and could not fight Germans. He was then shot.

The mounted platoon of Regiment 54, coming from Valona, made a reconnaissance patrol into the mountainous country eastward Valona, resting in a village where the population met it very kindly and offered it milk, bread and cheese freely. When the horse squadron of this platoon was left there alone with about 15 to 20 men, while the other people carried out the ordered reconnaissance, the same villagers, armed, fell upon those left behind and knocked them down.

If partisans were in danger of being caught by Germans, they hid their weapons as soon as the Germans arrived, acted like farmers and inhabitants, were friendly and entertained the Germans like their guests. As soon as they left, they were partisans again and attacked the Germans as soon as they were outnumbered.

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German prisoners were not taken. I know of only two cases where prisoners were returned alive.

An N. O. of the Division Staff named S., a native of Vienna, was ambushed in his motor vehicle on the Elbasan - Lake Ochrida road in September 1943, when he drove into an ambush aimed at an Italian infantry division marching off to the east. All the Italians were killed and their uniforms and luggage were stolen. S. himself, because he was Viennese, was dragged along by the gang leader, who had studied in Vienna and spoke German, and used as a body servant. He managed to escape only in November and was found lying exhausted on the road near Elbasan in a pitiful condition. He told me, "The gang I was with never took prisoners. Almost every day German soldiers were brought to the forest camp, stripped naked and shot. Even the youngest, 17 years old, who often begged heartbreakingly for their lives, were not spared. Linen and uniforms of those shot were put to use by the partisans. I witnessed horrible things."

To characterize the situation in Greece, serve an excerpt from the affidavit of the former commander of the 22nd Air Force Fighter Regiment of the 11th Air Force Field Division, Erhard Glitz, dated October 13, 1947 (American Military Tribunal No. V, Nuremberg, Document Book III for Felmy, Document No. 71, page 16). It states, among other things: "I know nothing about counts 1 and 2 of the indictment. I do remember, however, that at the end of 1943 a motorized medical detachment of about 60 to 80 men was attacked on a road near Tripoli. The partisans had stopped a flock of sheep at a bridge crossing as a barrier, so that the column had to stop. It was shot up from the heights all around. After that they were all massacred, and women and children are said to have taken part in it. People's eyes were gouged out, their penises cut off and put into the mouths of the dead and wounded. This assault may be related to charge 1 to 5 n).

Furthermore, I know that on the occasion of the attempted liberation of about 70 soldiers by the 117th Jäger Division held prisoners in Mantinea (Peloponnese) and, according to local residents, were treated cruelly, these prisoners were murdered by the partisans when the troops approached. They were found mutilated in the slopes and rocks of a hillside into which they had been thrown. Time about end of December 1944. Connection with indictment 2 to 9 k).

Regarding the development of the situation in my area and with the division: Until the raid on the 5/21 in the fall of 1943, we were not aware of the activities of the partisan forces.

-167- men as good as nothing is known. The Drum Division was located in the northern suburbs of Athens and was fully occupied with training. The 5/21 opened our eyes for the first time to the presence of the partisans, whom from then on we called only bandits. The company was on a reconnaissance march to the Skurta area, about 20 km northwest of Athens, since complaints had been made about increasing extortion and forced recruitment by the population from the border towns. The company was ambushed near the monastery of Ajos Me-litios and was severely decimated, leaving about 20 prisoners, including several wounded, in the hands of the gangs. These people were not given anything to eat or drink until their execution. After two days, as far as I

remember reading in the report, a tribunal of judges convened and presented the soldiers with a number of knives to choose from, with which each wished to be stabbed.

They were stabbed one by one from above by the infamous "Schächtstich" between neck and chest, amidst the howls of the bandits. Those who were not immediately dead were left beaten and kicked. A private played dead and escaped in the night and after more than 20 hours of wandering to a German railroad guard and gave the authentic report.

This was the prelude in our area to a myriad of vile crimes against German soldiers and the Greek population.

The organization, education and training of the gangs was entirely Soviet Russian. According to defected partisans, commissars had a decisive influence, a number of whom were Bulgarians and, in the case of the staffs, Russians as well from time to time.

The gangs worked closely with the EAM, which had its agents in all localities and were the true rulers. Through the notorious terrorist organization "Opla", they kept most of the population in fear and obedience. Confidants and persecuted people constantly reported reprisals of money, food, and mothers complained about the forced recruitment of their sons.

Anyone who resisted passively or actively was liquidated sooner or later. The bandits did not care about age or gender. Even children were killed whose parents were in any way not obedient to the bandits' wishes.

Examples of many: In Megara, a woman and daughter were washing clothes for a battalion staff located there. First, the daughter was kidnapped to the lair and martyred to death there. Some time later, the mother was pinned to her bedroom door at night in the presence of her 17-year-old boy with a number of knives and died shortly thereafter.

In Aspropyrgos, whole families have been liquidated in a similar way, sometimes in broad daylight in the nearby fields, mostly rich farmers, -168-.

who were no longer willing or able to comply with the ongoing extortion. Not a day in the week passed without some such message from suffering Greeks to the troops asking for help - or looking for abductees. A few armed men (EAM) completely dominated the population in remote villages, which often resorted to mostly unsuccessful self-help, since the German occupation was not able to provide even remotely the necessary protection. At the time, General Felmy subsequently gave me permission, against higher instructions, to issue weapons to reliable Greeks in remote places, a measure that became more and more urgent with the increasing terror of the bandits. Thus some Greeks and their families remained alive, as the good peasants, mostly ex-soldiers, formed self-defense units and also went with the troops and evzones to undertakings.

Simultaneously with the terror against the population, the consciously directed and guided activity against the troops increased. Only from well-prepared ambushes and when they knew themselves in the majority, the bandits attacked the troops. As a rule, they targeted small transports, guards and loners, who were always killed in the cruelest way.

Examples: German-Greek logging detachment of six Germans and eleven Greeks was ambushed northeast of Megara in late March 1944. The II/22 initially found only one soldier, whose abdomen and neck had been slashed several times and whose genitals had been cut off. The soldier was shown to the population of Megara. - The eleven Greeks were found buried close to the ground a few days later during a search operation in Mirini. According to statements by the bandits Bapadimi-triu and Kostas - the former from Eritrea near Thebes - who later entered German service, they had been tortured limb by limb for hours and finally roasted in oil. B. and K. entered German service because they no longer wanted to serve as decent soldiers with criminals.

P.S.: In principle, the Greeks, when cooperating with the German troops, had only committed themselves to service against the gangs. This also applies to the Evzones, who, as far as I know, had sworn assurances that they were no longer obligated to serve in the event of combat operations with Allied troops.

At the end of May 1944, a transport of 11 wounded soldiers from another raid was brought to a halt on the road from Thebes to Megara. All the soldiers were found lined up in the Chaussee ditch with their eyes gouged out and some of their genitals cut off.

It had been intended - General Speidel probably knows more about it - to organize an exhibition with picture documents of atrocities committed by the gangs. Because of the feared repercussions for the relatives in the -169

Reich and on the families of the Greek fellow combatants this was not carried out. The high Greek clergy, among other influential persons, however, has been shown to my knowledge a part of the pictures.

The goal of the partisans and bandits with this kind of warfare was to induce the German troops and leadership to take tougher measures through ever-increasing raids and atrocities. Some attempts to persuade them to fight decently were answered scornfully and taken as weakness as well as a good sign of successful proceedings. Domestically, the goal, which was also achieved in wide districts, was to force the Greek population into the ranks of the EAM by force, using all means of clandestine terror. Most of the bandits had civilian clothes under their uniforms - if they had one - or were disguised from the start as harmless shepherds, peasants pp. Raids in the vicinity of the troops were almost always carried out in civilian clothes. The fear of the population of the gangs was everywhere apparent." -170-

The Russian Invasion of the German East "Liberation" and Expulsion by the Soviets

Close behind the retreating German troops, which could no longer stop the Soviet superiority, the Red Army invaded West Prussia, East Prussia, Silesia and finally Pomerania and Brandenburg.

The property of the Germans, whose timely evacuation had often been irresponsibly delayed by the services, was lost. Men, women and children instantly became lawless slaves and property of the red victors. Incited by the hate chants of the communist intellectual propagandists of the caliber of Ilya Ehrenburg, they threw overboard all inhibitions and all stirrings of humanity.

In his book "Woina" Ilya Ehrenburg summarized his appeals to the Red Army. The original documents are in the Federal Archives in Koblenz. You have to know them to understand what immense suffering came upon German people as a result of the invasion of the Red Army. Here are just a few examples:

"We no longer say good morning or good night! We say in the morning: "Kill the German and in the evening: "Kill the German!!!"

"It's not about books, love, stars now, it's only about the one thought now: to kill the Germans. To kill them all. To bury them ... There is nothing more beautiful for us than German corpses. Kill the Germans! - the old mother asks you. Kill the German! - the child begs you."

"Germans are not human beings, Germans are two-legged animals, disgusting creatures, beasts." "They have no soul. They are single-celled creatures, soulless microbes equipped with machines, weapons, and mortars."

"If you beat one German to death, beat another to death; there is nothing funnier for us than German corpses!"

The effect of this murderous incitement was mass murder, mass rape and total robbery.

On top of that, the Red leadership had long known that the German East was to be torn apart and dismembered and that the robbery of all German property was a done deal. As early as October 4, 1942, the exiled Pole K. Prus- -171-

zczynski in the magazine "Wiadomosci Polskie," London: "Poland should cede territories in the East to the Soviet Union and be compensated for them from East German territories." On December 18, 1942, at a press conference in Chicago, Sikorski demanded: "Extended access to the Baltic Sea, German border areas in western Poland, and Polish occupation of all German territories east of the Oder."

These Polish robbery demands found a willing ear especially with the American President F. D. Roosevelt. On March 14, 1943, Roosevelt already discussed in Washington with the British Foreign Minister Eden the cession of East Prussia to Poland and the expulsion of the East Prussians.

Smiling, the Kremlin watched the development. On October 1, 1943, top Soviet functionary Eugen Varga published in Moscow the Soviet plan for the postwar treatment of Germany. It included partition, dismemberment, territorial separation, and reparations. By extension, Varga's plan became the basis for all Allied policy toward Germany in the postwar period. Especially in America, the Soviet plan was studied with great interest and inspired Henry Morgenthau Jr. in turn to develop plans for the treatment of postwar Germany.

Four days after the Moscow Declaration, on October 5, 1943, Roosevelt confirmed the separation of East Prussia from Germany, advocating that all "dangerous elements of the population" be forcibly resettled.

Twenty days later, on October 25, 1943, the three Allied foreign ministers agreed in Moscow that East Prussia should be ceded by Germany.

In Tehran on December 1, 1943, Winston Churchill proposed the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's western border and the cession of all of Upper Silesia to Poland. Returning to London, Churchill informed Mikolajczyk, then President in exile, of the Tehran outcome, saying: "In the West, seven million Germans living between the

German-Polish border will be expelled to Germany proper."

It was not until a month later, on February 22, 1944, that Churchill informed the House of Commons of the expulsion and breakup plans, meeting with many a concern.

In Washington on June 12, 1944, Roosevelt solemnly promised Silesia and East Prussia to Mikolajczyk, the Polish president in exile. Encouraged in this way, the Polish government in exile decided on August 30, 1945 in London to expel all Germans after the war.

In Quebec, Canada, on September 11/12, 1944, Roosevelt and Churchill signed Henry Morgenthau, Jr.'s Germany Plan, which, in addition to the total impoverishment and enslavement of Germany, included -172-

provided for the cession of East Prussia to the Soviet Union and Poland as well as Silesia up to the Katzbach to Poland.

Before the British House of Commons on December 15, 1944, Churchill expressly approved the expulsion of the Germans from the territories falling to Poland.

In Yalta in the Crimea, from February 5 to 11, 1945, the Oder-Neisse border was determined with such thoroughness that not even a map was present in the Allied meeting room during the debate on this point, which was so decisive for Germany. This is how the "confusion" between the Neisse of Görlitz and the Neisse of Glatz happened, as a result of which Guben, Forst, Görlitz, Grünberg, Sagan, Glogau, Liegnitz, Hirschberg, Schweidnitz and parts of Breslau, Neisse and Glatz were also lost.

When Winston Churchill expressed his fear that the expulsion of over six million Germans would horrify the British people, Stalin calmly replied: "Where the Red Army goes, there are no Germans to be found anyway. They have all long since run away of their own accord." Churchill replied laconically that this, of course, simplified the problem.

Unfortunately, not all Germans wanted or were able to run away from their Soviet liberators.

Tens of thousands and tens of thousands of them were overrun in the slow treks by the tank packs of the Red Army, millions fell into the hands of the merciless victors. Tragically, there were also numerous air evacuees from West and Central Germany in the German East. In East Prussia 200,000, in East Pomerania 100,000, in East Brandenburg 75,000 and in Silesia even 45,000.

All these masses were added to the local population, most of whom were now running for their lives. From East Prussia, 250,000 were rescued by treks or by rail, 450,000 across the lagoon in the area of Danzig and Pomerania, and from Pillau across the spit, also to Danzig and Pomerania again 450,000. From Pillau, another 450,000 could be rescued by sea with ships; in East Prussia itself 500,000 Germans remained behind.

From the Bay of Gdansk alone, the Kriegsmarine sailed out about 90,000. Although Hela was already in the hail of Soviet bombs and artillery shells, the Kriegsmarine succeeded in rescuing 427,000 refugees and Landsers by May 6. 60,000, mostly soldiers, had to stay behind.

But a large part of the fugitive East Prussians, about two million, could not be removed from East Pomerania, the Danzig area and West Prussia. They remained behind. In Silesia alone, one and a half million were overrun by the Red Army.

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1.6 million managed to escape from Silesia to the West. But just as many fled to their misfortune into the territory of the Czechs!

All of them were defenseless hostages in the hands of the victory-intoxicated, dehumanized Soviet soldiery. To be German meant to be fair game. About three million German women were raped - those who resisted were shot. In general, they were shot at will.

From the large selection of harrowing accounts of experiences, only a few are listed here that give information about how the German people were treated.

Sofje Jesko from Penczniew, district Turek i. Poland:

"On January 18, 1945, the inhabitants of the Turek area received orders to immediately withdraw to the west. Flooding back parts of the Wehrmacht, intermixed with refugees from the governorate, had reported horrible atrocities committed by the Soviets, thus increasing the general mood of panic.

Therefore, we also left our home in a hurry. On completely icy, congested roads, it was only possible to move forward at a walk.

West of Schroda our trek was suddenly overtaken by German trucks with hooded civilians on them: men,

women, children, and we were ordered to leave the road and drive onto the field to the side.

Very soon it turned out that these were all Russian-Polish-Jewish partisans, who immediately surrounded our immense fleet of cars and began to loot them.

Shortly thereafter, Soviet tanks arrived. A general - I myself speak fluent Russian and Polish - asked about the number of German officers present and gave the order for the immediate liquidation of all those who were somehow suspicious.

By dropping smoke bombs, a horrible panic arose. In this artificial fog, a general slaughter, looting and raping began. One could hear the screams of the slain, shooting, the shrieking of violated women, the cries for help of children and old people.

On a truck - we managed to escape from the general witch's cauldron, unlike our closest acquaintances, a Mrs. Natalie Lange with her son and rich Polish refugees, who were also slain in the process, because we explained to all Soviets etc. that we were deported Eastern workers - an old fury sat in open fur with white fluttering hair. She was joined by raw soldiers, etc., young desperate screaming women with their small children in their arms. This old fury grabbed the children and banged their heads on the edge of the truck. "Angels!" The collapsing mothers were dragged away. -174-

We spent the night shivering in an out-of-the-way forest guard's house. At night the son, a Pole, came loaded with loot and told how they had had to douse the dragged-together corpses of the murdered with gasoline and set them on fire: "We're not as stupid as Hitler, he said with a grin.

We then slowly moved back to our homeland on foot. Everywhere in the woods we encountered downed soldiers and civilians, everywhere we met squads of Polish brutes armed with German rifles hunting down scattered people and boasting how many they had already murdered and how they had tortured them.

Once back home, the persecution of the Germans who had stayed here or returned carelessly continued. The smallest thing was enough to be shot or, after severe maltreatment, to be deported. Denunciation flourished. No German had even the slightest right any more. Night after night, Polish brats dragged drunken Russians into the houses where German women and girls were, or betrayed them in their hiding places however cleverly chosen"

Mrs. F. M. from Gr. Ottenhagen, Samland County (Ostpr.)

"Together we wandered now on January 29, 1945, in deep snow and great cold, and were overtaken by small troops of Russians, who always demanded watch and boots. In the process, the 80-year-old Mr. B. Mahnsmühle was shot while stepping out in the woods.

In fear and excitement we continued to a larger estate, which was already occupied by Russians, and there we had to leave our car. We continued on foot until we met another car, which we joined. Together we were 19 people and 4 children. Russians kept coming, demanding watches and so on. Suddenly two passenger cars came with Russians who took everything in a flash, handbags, suitcases, luggage, furs, whatever they saw and was valuable. Then - a quick line-up for shooting. The raid came so quickly that no one dared to say anything. My husband, one of the first, was shot in the head before my eyes. Since we were standing right at the beginning, I heard only shouting and shooting, the pain took away my consciousness, and I fell down. Out of 19 people, I alone was left without injury. Mr. Rehfeld, Deputant Wagner had been seriously wounded by five shots, and three persons were slightly wounded. Even the half-paralyzed Mrs. Rehberg was lifted from the wagon and also shot. - With the last of our strength we got together and drove on, but were then stopped by Russians and taken to the Schönmohr camp, which was a collection camp. Whether anyone there took care of the wounded -175-

I can't say, because I went out myself with some other women for fear of being raped by the Russians.

On foot in the deepest snow we came to Fuchsberg, there it was like everywhere, almost all women were raped, especially the young ones. The next day we were led in a long column to Löwenhagen and housed in settlements, including Poles. Early the next morning we went on via Hohenhagen to Groß Barthen, where many men were transported to the Pregel, and all the others went on via Groß Ottenhagen to the Seewalde camp.

In Seewalde a body search was carried out, and what was left was now found, so that only the clothes were kept. At night the soldiers came with flashlights and picked out women. If they resisted, they were beaten until they went along. Older courageous women who spoke Russian then took care of the food, which was still plentiful there. After four days we were led, always in columns, to Gr. Lindenau, where we were housed in pigsties and wooden sties, and later in houses. In Gr. Lindenau there were many shootings, which were carried out in the

woods. The refugees had to assemble very often, and in the process the Russians were always looking for certain persons, who were then taken at night and never came back. The older boys were taken away from their mothers and never returned. The stay lasted 14 days.

During this time there were already diseases and many deaths and great fear and excitement among the refugees. Women disappeared at night and did not return. Rape was the order of the day, and gunfire was often heard in the houses. Everyone had to take care of their own food.

At the beginning of March we were driven from Gr. Lindenau on six open trucks via Insterburg, Budwethen to Tilsit, in 20 degree cold. There were many illnesses and two deaths. In Schillen we were housed in cramped rooms, a misery for everyone who was there. There were people of all ages, many of the older ones could not endure the hardships and fell by the wayside on the way. Gunshots then told us that the Russian guards had shot these poor people.

In Lengwethen we lived in the Johanna Ambrosia School for about eight days. We went in groups to search for food and found dead girls, aged ten to twelve, raped in stables and barns, also young girls had bled to death with torn clothes, the traces were clear.

Everywhere we went we found dead people. Then we were -176-

again distributed to remote localities and came to the vicinity of Breitenstein, where there was a commandant's office. It was always going to get worse with fear and excitement, we were taken to do all kinds of work (bury the dead, etc.). Here, too, it was best not to leave the house, since there was always the danger of rape and looting. So mostly the older men brought in everything that was needed.

After a few days we continued via Breitenstein, walking to Budwethen and further to Schloßberg with one overnight stay. Almost every refugee had a small handcart, and it was very difficult for women with children to get along on icy roads in the great cold without food. In Schloßberg we were accommodated in a bombed, dirty hospital, then we were registered and the Russians made speeches to us (for instance in the sense that the time for us is over now, just always press the bell button, now we will work, which then also proved to be true).

We were distributed to Kussen, also foot march, which meant hell for us. The food was bad, because there was nothing to be found there, the Russians gave only little flour to women who worked. Vermin took over and many persons died of starvation there. Nevertheless, all persons had to work, lining up early every morning, and then they went to the fields in groups. 18 to 20 younger women were harnessed to the plow and had to pull the plow every day, and woe to them if they did not force (it)!

It was horrible, if the women failed, then there were always beatings, because the Russians were always there and threatened. The older women were harnessed to the harrows. Mrs. Förster May, Löwenhagen, often fainted. I could not stand this either, and we were then allowed to occupy ourselves in the vegetable garden."

G. Fieguth from Tiegenhof, Gr. Werder County (West Pr.):

"Our treks were scattered at the end of January, and everything was pushing toward the city. Danzig was now literally packed from cellar to roof with people. From three sides the unfortunate city was shelled by heavy artillery, large bomb squadrons attacked non-stop from the air, and in a few days the fate of this proud, beautiful city was sealed.

Among the enormous number of people buried under the rubble, crushed in the streets, were also many residents of our district. It will never be possible to determine the number. Large was the number of those who were overrun and carried off by the Russians around Gdansk and in the suburbs. Unfortunately, many of these unfortunates have not returned to this day, and their names have never been ascertained. With a drama

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of immense magnitude, our trek came to a terrible end here in these last days of March. But the drama of individual fates continued. Even of those who tried to escape by ship, many, often entire families, found death in the waves.

Unfortunately, there was also a large number of men from our district who took up arms and poison and sought suicide for their families and for themselves. At the beginning of the flight, many families could not or did not want to leave their farm, their old home. Families lost their nerves during the flight, and how large the number of families is who put an end to the drama during the occupation and deportation by the Russians will never be determined.

I will mention only a few families. The local farmer W. B., Groß Montau, brought the trek of his village as well as his farm in impeccable order on the way, then he shot his wife, his daughter, his grandchild and himself. Farmer J. W., Schönsee, drove the wagons of his farm the short distance to the Vistula, there he turned the old Landauer, in which he himself, sitting on the coach-box, drove his family, drove back to his farm, there he shot his wife, his three daughters, aged 17 to 21, and himself. The farmer M. P., Fürstenau, drove up to the western bank of the Vistula, there on the roadside, in the snowstorm of the night, he shot his wife and himself. The district farmer leader v. R., Rosenort, brought his treks in the best order as far as the Danzig lowlands, but he did not want to leave his homeland any further and chose suicide by poison with his wife."

Mrs. Frida Volckmann from Dambitzen, Elbing County

"In the third village, at the end of January, my husband was captured and taken away. My husband could still shout to me, "Go back to Occalitz!"

We then drove on with the farmer from Pr. Holland. On the wagon lay the farmer's daughter, whom the Russians had raped several times during the trip and when stopping in the villages, and shot her in the back when she tried to resist. The mother of the severely wounded woman, who tried to come to the aid of her daughter, was shot through the hand. My daughter-in-law and the wife of a Danzig merchant, who had joined us, were raped several times during the ride by jumping up young Russian soldiers, and this in the presence of the dying young woman, the adult daughter of the elderly Danzig lady, and the other persons. -

In Occalitz we could not go to the estate, because the Russians were living there. We therefore drove to the district forester's house about 1 km away, where we met the old district forester Täger with his wife and two married daughters and their children, as well as a lot of refugees and women and girls from the village. The Russians appeared every evening, several times taking a -178-

Number of women and girls down to the youngest, who were violated several times a day. On the fourth day, four scattered German soldiers suddenly appeared to get food and hide. Unfortunately, at the same time a Russian patrol arrived and immediately shot one of the Germans and captured the others. Now the Russians became even more thuggish, and the numerous women and girls were half insane with fear of the Russians' violent acts. Some of the younger women and girls already committed suicide.

The district forester was threatened with eviction from the house and worse, since in the opinion of the Russians he had shown himself to be strongly suspicious of espionage, so that he asked everyone present to leave the forester's house, especially since he and his family had decided to go to their deaths. One daughter, a doctor, had already poisoned herself with her two children, he said. Whoever wanted to be shot, a bullet was also there for him. Otherwise, the house would have to be evacuated immediately. In the forester's house alone, 62 people from the Occalitz estate and village then died by drowning in the lake, by being shot by the district forester Täger, by poison, and by hanging."

Mrs. Klara Seidler from Gdansk: "In groups of five to six Russians the soldiers came at the end of January and took our little food and whatever else they liked, and then it was said again: "Frau komm!" (Woman come!).

Whoever did not go with them was beaten cruelly and finally forced to go along, mostly in the hallway or on the stairs or even on the upper floors, which had been destroyed, the women were abused, their breasts were savagely bitten and they were tortured terribly, always by many in a row. Especially our Mrs. Mietke, a 67-year-old, was taken again and again. She had a capott cap on and big glasses and always begged so miserably, nothing helped.

Mrs. Brückmann did not want to have her daughter of 12 years ravished before her eyes. She held her Inge, a pretty girl with long frizzy hair, in her arms. The disappointed Russian slammed them both down.

Mrs. Paap's daughter, Mrs. Lemke, was overpowered by a Russian, an old officer was waiting next. When she resisted and begged her mother, the Russian shot her, the mother got away with a shot in the back.

In the Trinity Cemetery, the mortuary was filled with people. Between the graves, the women were made, shot into the gardener's house, thereby killing the people who were hiding.

This all played out before our eyes."

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Mrs. Johanna Mrowka from Ebenrode (Ostpr.)

"Some women, my son and I made our way (back) to Stallupönen at the end of January. Almost every day we covered 20 kilometers.

For the night we looked for a place to stay. There were Russians all over the streets, and they watched where the Germans went. During the night they forced their way into our quarters and raped us all. I was often raped by the Russians on the march to Stallupönen. In one night the Russians took me five times. Many women were taken by the Russians up to 15 times. A great many of them died shortly afterwards.

On the way we saw young and old women lying along the roads, simply tortured to death. The Russians had then beaten these women's skirts over their heads. We could then see that the underwear and abdomen were completely bloody. In a bunker we found a young girl with her old father, both murdered by the Russians. The girl's skirts were also up, and we could see that her underwear was also bloody. On the march to Stallupönen we saw such horror pictures every night or even experienced them ourselves. We did not even go into the houses anymore, but stayed outside during the night."

Mrs. Editha Müller from Drossen, Westernberg County (Brandenbg.):

"The refugee train, which was to take us away at 12 o'clock on February 1, 1945, and in which the greater part of the Drossen inhabitants were, was fired upon by Russian tanks about 300 meters from Lake Zeuschtsee. There were over 200 dead. Everything was rushing out into the open. My 14-year-old daughter jumped out of the compartment window and ran into the nearby forest, where we found her later only after much shouting and searching. My 74-year-old mother, my 12-year-old son, my 5-year-old daughter and I were on the train heading for the exit. We had to walk through pools of blood and past blood-spattered baby carriages. Out of the window of one compartment hung a soldier whose head had been torn off by a bullet. In the woods, parents were looking for their children, and children were screaming for their mothers. A woman was running around with a bullet in her head, and a young woman had all her fingers shot up. Horror and horror were in everyone's eyes.

All afternoon we lay in the slush in the forest, which was constantly being shelled. We saw how old Mr. Birkholz from Drossen, Breite Straße, collapsed and died. Towards evening, because the train was lying shot up on the track, we went back to our house at Röthsee and spent the night in the cellar because of the shelling. The next morning we went with neighbors to a remote farmstead, since our town was still under fire -180-

lay. We did not return to our house, Drossen, Weinbergsweg 9. The Poles looted it and set fire to the neighboring property, which burned down completely. Dr. Walther told me herself that she had been raped six times in a row by Russians in the presence of her husband when the Russians marched in, and that she would take poison, which she did later. A hundred or so inhabitants took their own lives in the gasworks, many others by shooting and poison."

Mrs. Marie Buchholz from Old Felicjanow, Tomaszow County (Poland):

"On February 3, 1945, however, my husband was arrested in our apartment by Polish police and Russian soldiers and taken into custody in Koluszki. My husband left the apartment alone with the police and Russian soldiers. As I found out the other day, my husband was used for work by the Polish police. Since then I have heard nothing more from my husband, until on February 6, 1945, I was told by Polish civilians that my husband had been found dead four kilometers west of Felicjanow. I then went to the designated place in the woods and found my husband lying shot, next to two other Germans who had been disfigured beyond recognition. They were my husband's deputy, Fr. Tierling, and the beer distributor Edmund Baum. A few steps away from them lay the bodies of nine murdered German soldiers. On the same day, after I had obtained permission from the Polish commandant, my brother-in-law and my youngest son went to the place of horror with a handcart and picked up my husband's body. We wanted to take him home and quickly put together another coffin, but the Polish militia intervened and did not allow it. So we buried the body like this in our cemetery. That was on February 8, 1945.

In general, the Polish intelligentsia did not dare to act, but the mob raged and murdered. Whether they were guilty or not, they did not ask. The wealthy Germans or those of us who were employed by a German office were shot or slowly tortured to death. But the other Volksgenossen were not spared either."

Karl Tiffert from Lassen, district of Brieg (Lower Silesia):

"On February 4, 1945, Sunday, after the Russians had crossed the Oder River, there was fighting in and around Lossen, which continued in the direction of Grottkau; behind Grottkau was the German front. When the first

Russian tanks with infantry arrived, we were immediately rid of watches, rings and other things. Shortly after infantry arrived, and there was the -181-

Devil loose. Immediately the first women were raped, from children as young as 12 to old women over 80, which I myself saw at close range. My second maid, Helene T., was used by the Russians thirteen times in a row. Not a day went by where it was quiet. The young girls and women usually spent the nights in the garden under the bushes. If a man stood up for them, he was shot or beaten to death, like farmer Hermann Wende shot with his wife and daughter, merchant Theodor Ruscher and Max Leesch, Max Peisker shot. Pensioner Scholz with wife beaten to death with a spade. A 12 year old girl was protected by her mother, mother shot, girl used. There was almost no woman who was not violated. An old woman, Mrs. Rahn, used four times. Frau Schneidermeister Pfeifer from Jeschen hanged her three children, aged eight to thirteen, and then herself, out of desperation. From the village of Jeschen almost all the males were taken away and disappeared, as well as from Lossen who were there. Most of them have disappeared. Whether party or not. In the villa Buchs was GPU, where I myself was interrogated, from 30 men only 4 men, I on my Russian language, were released, the others deported, nothing more heard of them. All the livestock was taken out in a few hours, so that all the farms were empty except for a few cats. All the inventory was demolished. The Lutheran church was completely emptied, the Catholic tabernacle was broken, and all the church belongings were scattered in the park and in the village. Many buildings were set on fire.

The dead Germans lay around, as well as cattle, until the harvest. No one could dare to go out on the street if they didn't want to be taken away.

Mrs. Dora Mietzko from Elbing (Westpr.):

"On February 9, 1945, the Russians reached our district, Königsstraße/ Hochstraße, in my hometown of Elblag. After the terrible fighting was over (it is known that Elblag is one of the most destroyed cities in the East), we thought we could breathe a sigh of relief and did not yet suspect that only now the much greater horrors would come upon us.

No sooner had the first Russians discovered us in our small, self-made bunker in our garden (Hochstraße 5) than they began to loot us. Watches, jewelry, all valuables were taken from us. But all this touched us little, because all of us (we were about 18 people, fellow residents) were totally exhausted and starved after the shelling of our district for days, since we could not leave the bunker during that time. Our apartment building had long since burned down.

Then a drunken Russian came along and demanded "schnapps" from us, which of course we did not have. Full of rage at this, he took a hand grenade and
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threw it into the bunker, which would inevitably have blown up and buried us all, had it not been for the fact that there was a bucket of water at the bunker entrance. The grenade fell into this bucket of water. It hissed, the bunker was full of smoke, and so only those who were sitting closest to the bunker entrance were injured, two of them seriously, they were shot by the Russians, including my uncle, Bernhard Harwardt, 56 years old. They were simply shot, well they no longer had the strength to go on, when we were subsequently driven out, worse than cattle. Thus began the path of suffering for many, many thousands of people, old and young.

From all the streets, from all the houses, people were rounded up and locked up, whether in prison or in other public buildings. We, for example, were herded into the mining school and had to spend the night there. It was horrible. Everything was crammed together, next to and on top of each other, all exhausted, starving people. Some of them ate something, but most of them had nothing, because they had had no opportunity to get anything else.

We still believed, or rather hoped, that this would soon be over and we would be sent back to our homes. We had already been promised "warm food"! What a mockery, how long most of us were not to see it again, many not at all. The whining of the little ones and the big ones who were hungry and thirsty, and our own hunger was already unbearable. When I think of the many crying children, my own two and three year olds (there is probably nothing more heartbreaking than to see the children crying from hunger), a woman giving birth (without any aids), I am still gripped by horror today.

And then probably the worst thing that could happen to us women began. It was horrible when we realized the incomprehensible. The beasts came without stopping, shining their lanterns around the room and taking one after the other. There was no help. And there was hardly a woman who was spared this fate of raw rape, I did not escape it either. My poor sisters, young and inexperienced, and the many, many women and girls who had to submit if they did not want to be shot. If anyone refused to go along, the pistol was shown. This is how the first night of the "liberation" by the Russians went.

Early in the morning, the whole mass of people was driven out to the city. Women and children in large groups, as well as men separately. That was the morning of February 10, 1945, which is etched in my memory for all time. I see it all before me, now as then. The heartbreaking scenes that took place there cannot be reproduced. My two sisters, aged 16 and 26, who were my then critically ill

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Mother were torn from her side. How could we have known that we would never see her again, nor my father, who stood further back in the line of men being rounded up.

Only much later, when we had left Elbing, did we learn of the suffering of our poor dead through friends and acquaintances who had returned. Some of them, who were with them in Siberia, could only tell us that they all died, or rather perished. The dead, emaciated to skeletons, were buried naked in mass graves, according to the report. Nobody can imagine what these poor people had to suffer. I myself escaped deportation because I held my two children tightly when the Russians tugged at me. It was a stroke of luck; for even that was no obstacle. How many mothers were torn from the side of their children! A young mother, who left her baby carriage to me after she had laid her starving infant in a pillow on the side of the road, so that I could put my seriously ill, half-starved one-and-a-half-year-old girl in it (she died a year later of hunger-scurvy), was dragged along by the Russians at the same moment. Like everyone else, she called out for her mother to come to her aid, but she too was driven away with the blows of the butts. I will never be able to forget all these young, blooming people who stood there crying and complaining, and others who were completely apathetic, barely able to hold themselves upright.

After all the young girls and women in our troop had been pulled out, we, a small remnant, were driven back into the burning city. We managed to get as far as the center of town, where I found shelter with my friend, Mrs. Edith Kämmer, in her apartment building at Traubenstraße 18. I will only mention the constant harassment and rape in passing. This was not to end for the time being. We were now a lot of people in this house, and for the next few weeks we lived in the cellars under the most primitive conditions imaginable, unprotected, without rights, exposed to the brutality and arbitrariness of the Russians day and night. The continuous looting did not touch us at all anymore, but the persistent fear of ever new rapes paralyzed us completely.

The deportations continued, and every day one could hear the cries for help of the women, who were taken away from everywhere, from the houses, in search of food (one was dependent on finding something edible from the empty cellars and apartments), while fetching water from the well (light and water pipes were completely destroyed). I myself always lived in mortal fear, because the thought of being torn away from the children was probably the worst thing that could happen to you. And one was always and everywhere exposed to the danger of being kidnapped.

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I will report below how the Russians carried out this deportation action: It was on Good Friday - they had a special predilection to choose such and similar holidays or Sundays - when our street was suddenly cordoned off. There were whistles and screams from all sides, and within a few minutes all houses and gardens were surrounded. So there was no thought of escape. All the houses were searched from the ground to the cellar. I managed to crawl into a hiding place - already prepared for this purpose - at the last minute (because it was not the first time). There I waited, trembling and half out of my mind, to see if it would happen to me this time, but it passed me by this time as well. From our house alone, four women (including a mother of small children) were taken at that time. (Two of them came back later because of old age and illness). I saw only briefly - when the Russians had left the house as quickly as they had come before, for one street was lined up with another and then cordoned off - a long procession of women and girls in the middle of the street, weeping and wailing, some packed with bundles, others with blankets, and still others not even dressed in coats. And it was cold. I will not forget this sad procession either. They were pushed forward with the rifle butts of the rough guys.

Then came April 20, also such a day of horror. Even before that, all kinds of rumors reached us. But the day passed quietly, and we were confident and went to sleep. However, in clothes, because otherwise we knew no more rest. In case of emergency one had to be at least dressed. And then it became a bad night. I saw seven large fires that night alone. Again the house was suddenly full of Russians. Despite the fact that we had boarded up the front doors and barricaded them in every possible way, they were suddenly there, and this time even I did not manage to hide. Dead tired and starved as one already was, I lacked the strength to resist and revolt as well. It was raining cats and dogs when all of us women - leaving the children behind - were driven out, except for a few old people, including my mother. So I had this one consolation, that my two small children at least remained in the care of my mother. They had been awakened by the noise and were screaming terribly and calling for me while the Russians were already tearing at me. At that time I did not believe that I would come back again. It was terrible and cannot be expressed in words. But it was characteristic of the Russians how they tormented us that night, just out of sheer and wild joy. They drove us past several burns, leaving a squad at each burn. We were a long procession, gathered from a whole part of the city. And one was surprised that there were still so many of us.

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I myself was among a squad that had to stay behind in Petristraße. A large house was burning there, and we had to stand close to it. On the one hand the pouring rain, on the other the high flames, the crackling, the unbearable heat, the mortal fear that the house could collapse on us. And suddenly the Russians shouted that we were being counted, that every tenth person should come forward, that they should be shot because the Germans had started all these fires! What madness, as if even one German had dared to enter the street at night, he would have been immediately and inevitably shot by the patrols.

While these beasts were counting, others were shooting over our heads, whistling and banging everywhere, and a confused mess was created. We tried to run away, but of course it was futile, because the Russians had immediately surrounded us. I can still see that grin of theirs, those devilish grimaces, in front of me today. So they feasted on our fear of death, knowing that we were helpless.

Then suddenly they pushed us with their rifle butts and shouted that we should all run, otherwise we would all be shot. We then ran for our lives - weak as we were - until we felt a little safer in the darkness. That was at 3:00 a.m., at 12:00 a.m. they had taken us out. A few of them then took us back to our street and did nothing more to us. Every time after such or similar experience we collapsed exhausted.

Over the course of the months, we were completely worn down and jaded by these and similar experiences. Then something else came along that was to shake us all over again. At least that is what happened to me. Under the "leadership" of a German communist and her husband, who must have made friends with several Russians, we were forced to bury the many dead German soldiers still lying around in all the streets, houses and cellars. I would still be able today to go wherever we put them. We were strictly forbidden to take any papers on us. Not even this last service were we allowed to render to these poor people. How many people still waiting today could have been given news! I still have a small soldier's book - unfortunately without a name - which I took when we were about to bury some soldiers again in such an inhumane way. We were ordered to bury the horse carcass with them. One was sometimes half fainting with pity for these dead and their relatives, whom one did not even know.

One thing in particular should be mentioned: In the courtyard of the Pestalozzi School (Logenstraße) we laid about 25 soldiers to rest. These poor soldiers had all been severely wounded and lay in the cellar of the school, which must have been set up as an auxiliary hospital, as if in the throes of death, partly clutching, -186-

partly above and next to each other. It was horrible to watch. Some bore unmistakable signs of mutilation and shooting. I am still horrified when I see the picture in front of me, these pools of blood and lumps. They had all been bestially murdered by the Russians.

In the case of two women whom we buried once, it was clear that they had first been raped and then shot. They lay there half undressed, a picture of misery. They may also have struggled and been shot in the process."

Paul Thiel from Freystadt (Lower Silesia):

"First of all, on February 10, 1945, a decent-looking Soviet appeared at the cellar door - we were in the cellars of Villa Schröter, since they had several exits - and asked very politely in German whether there were still German

soldiers in the cellar, whether we still had weapons, which we could honestly deny. Then he advised us urgently to keep all still younger women and girls hidden from now on, since they would have to be at the disposal of the Soviet soldiers by order of Stalin ...

Now, non-stop, singing, hooting troops followed, totally drunk, the result of the unfortunately not in time destroyed enormous supplies of alcohol from the surrounding large Dominial distilleries. The Soviets invaded the houses, demanded watches and rings, looted as they passed, destroyed and threw away most of it at the next street corner, since they could not use it in combat.

Our nice Soviet promised to take care of us every few hours, which he did. But he was powerless against this hustle and bustle, these crowds.

At first, in our optimism, we believed that the majority of Russians might be similar. We assumed that our staying here, in contrast to the flight of most of our fellow citizens, was the right thing to do after all, but the bitter realization that this was all just sheer suicide was to sink in all too soon.

Packs of criminals, Soviet supplies, deserters, Poles, etc. followed the fighting force, poured into the houses, sweeping the lowest to the top. The unfortunate Germans were torn away from their property in the crudest manner, maltreated, abducted, women dragged out of every hiding place, however well camouflaged, and raped in the crudest manner, from 12-year-olds to 80-year-olds, unconcerned about bystanders.

It was therefore no wonder when husbands, fathers, wives, children who rushed to help were simply shot over, when others made an end to their existence out of desperation and shame.

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About 130 people: Men, women, children and some 'Wehrmacht members were buried in the first days....

The NKVD, as everywhere, following the troop on its heels, set up its interrogation cellars, and in Mr. Hein's house they extorted every desired confession in nightly medieval interrogations.

However, justice requires to note at this point that despite all this, the behavior of the Soviets did not assume this degree of barbaric sadism as it did later with the Poles who had set up their GPU cellar in the building of the district bank. What happened here is simply not to be reproduced in words!

Nevertheless, the repeated reference to the shameful order of the highest Soviet authorities, according to which every female being had to be at the disposal of the brutal victor, must not be omitted!

About 300 women and girls were rounded up from the city and the countryside under the flimsy camouflage of a work assignment and held in the house of the merchant Matzke under impossible conditions in order to be at the disposal of the Soviet troops night after night for weeks. Here age, pregnancy, illness did not play the slightest obstacle!

So further, at the Catholic hospital, the fence was closed and the unfortunate nuns were subjected to the same fate until I could later place them more safely elsewhere."

Mrs. Selma Deckwart from Possen, Bunzlau District (Lower Silesia):

"On February 13, 1945, in the morning at about 8:00 a.m., the Russian combat troops moved into our home village of Possen. Together with the Russian farm workers, who were assigned to farm work in the village at that time, the combat troops ransacked the individual houses and took everything of valuable clothing and valuables. Due to the prevailing fighting activities, we were forced to visit the cellar with several villagers.

In the evening the Russian soldiers took up quarters in the village. About 30 men moved into our house. In the meantime we had to perform services for the Russian soldiers and were constantly interrogated during this time. At the same time I was raped several times. In the late evening hours, about 9 p.m., I had to follow a number of Russian soldiers onto the street with my husband and the young woman Embschen (21 years old), and they drove us about 100 meters along the village road. Then we had to turn back with them, and in front of the little house of Mrs. Borrmann opposite my homestead the three of us had to line up, and the Russians, some of whom were very drunk, performed a joyous -188-

howling, continuously threatening to shoot, but shooting into the air. A short time later they dragged Mrs. Embscher into the stable.

Calling "dawei", I was now herded into a room on the second floor. Six Russians now fell upon me one after the other like beasts, after they had previously torn my clothes off my body. It would be going too far if I wanted to go into details of this bestial treatment, but in any case I had to endure about 25 of these rapes that night, and my

condition was indescribable. In the same night a Russian brought me back to my house. I did not find my husband at home. In anxious fear that they had shot my husband (for I had heard a shot fired close by while they were raping me), I could find no sleep; as soon as it turned gray, I looked for my husband and found him, too, in the place where I had been forced to leave him, fatally shot in the head. On February 18, 1945, with the help of a neighbor, I buried my husband in our plot. In the time that followed, I had to endure seven to eight rapes almost every day. I will never forget those ugly Mongolian faces. All this not pass me by without leaving a trace; today I am mentally ill, also physically. Every time the troops changed, the retreaters set fire to some houses."

Kurt Lachmann from Possen, Bunzlau District (Lower Silesia):

"We were staying in the cellar on February 13, 1945 (many women and young girls, who were also seeking shelter in our cellar, were present), when around noon the Russians ransacked our house for the first time, snatching everything that seemed useful to them at the moment, especially watches, jewelry and wedding rings. In the evening, like a horde, Russian soldiers stormed into our cellar and took all the women and girls up to the apartment. From the cellar one could hear the screaming of the women and girls. Only in the morning did they come back, some of them bleeding. This state of affairs lasted for about two weeks, and the same scenes were repeated every day.

During this time my uncle and my aunt Berta Kremse from Bunzlau were also there. One day I was on my way to the neighbor's house with my aunt and uncle when a Russian came toward us and wanted to drag my aunt along. She resisted, whereupon the Russian shot her in the body with a machine gun. My uncle fetched a handcart and drove the severely wounded woman to the neighbor's house. The Russian soldier followed us and shot my aunt again in the stomach. When she was still alive, the Russian hit her on the head with his MP. When we arrived at the homestead of the farmer Gustav Otte, my uncle carried the severely wounded woman, groaning and shouting.

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injured in the hallway. Again, this Russian had followed us up to here and now fired four more shots at her. When my aunt was still screaming, he hit her again on the head with the MP. Her face as well as her head was completely disfigured. She was 50 years old at that time. By threat of the Russians that my uncle should be taken away the next day, my uncle, my mother and younger brother committed suicide by premature closing of the coal-heated stove. I, too, was to leave my life with them, but when it became unbearable for me, I ran away.

My uncle August Lachmann (33 years old), severely injured in the leg due to an accident, was asked by the neighbor Selma Engmann to come to her on the first day before the Russians marched in, since she was alone in the house with her daughter. My uncle did not return from there. It was not until ten weeks later that he was found lying about a kilometer from home without any clothing and with stab wounds in his chest.

The mass rapes already mentioned very often took place in the presence of children of all ages. I myself, then 13 years old, also had to watch in numerous cases."

Mrs. G. B. from Birstonischken, Pogen County (Memelland):

"On the morning of February 17, 1945, the Russians arrived. What happened within an hour only came to my attention later. The last of our belongings, which were loaded onto a ladder truck, were loaded onto trucks; we were only allowed to keep what we were wearing. We were herded like cattle into the barn, and later taken to the next homestead. Now all the people were questioned individually. There were Russians, civilian prisoners, Poles, Frenchmen and Germans. The Belorussian, who had worked for us for four and a half years, also had his watch taken. They also wanted to take off his boots and leather jacket, but he refused. Then they asked him, "Did you work for the Germans?" When he answered this question with "Yes," they slapped him in the face. The tears stood in the eyes of the faithful man because of this disgrace of being beaten by his own countrymen.

Now all women with children and people over 60 were released and sent to Landsberg. The men, including my husband, who had undergone a serious lung operation in 1940 (full plastic surgery), were all kept there and are said to have been deported to the Urals later. I will never forget the first night in Landsberg. It was here that the first rapes began. I held the children tightly against me, hoping to escape the torment. I took my chances and said to the guard who had a machine gun pointed at us: "So -190-

shoot !" But he did not, but said in good German: "You're crazy !"

The other morning we continued in the direction of Korschen. In Eichhorn we stopped, because everyone was hungry and cold. We looked for an empty house to cook something. Everywhere destroyed household goods and the like. The yards and roads were full of abandoned refugee wagons. There were beds, linen and food lying around everywhere, which soon spoiled in the weather. And yet people had to eat from this food, which was stored next to dead people and livestock, in order to eke out a living.

For eight days we stayed in Eichhorn (about 16 people). One morning a Russian guard took us to Dirsén to work. There were some cattle here that we had to look after. Here we were regularly fed. At the beginning of March 1945, four women, including myself, were taken to Eichhorn. Here we were supposed to clean the apartments. We had done this work by late afternoon. Now a guard took us to a cellar where about 14 corpses lay. As the front approached in early February 1945, these people had taken refuge in the cellar. They had all been killed by machine guns. Now we were supposed to haul these dead, who had been lying under rubble for four weeks, up from the cellar and bring them behind the barn into a lime pit that was only half a meter deep. A stretcher was given to us. With wrapped hands we touched the dead, it was a frightening sight and I could not forget it for a long time. Later, we also got used to it."

Mrs. Hedwig Rosemann, from Wrocław:

"Mrs. Josef gave birth to a son in the cellar on February 18. Since the midwife lived only a few houses away, she was on the spot right away. It was terrible in the wet cellar. The child cried continuously. The mother had to come out into the daylight with her two children after two days, and she came with her mother to the second floor. But even she was not spared from the rapes, although everyone saw the little worm next to the young mother.

After ten days we had to vacate the old town, and we were ordered by the Russians to live in the villa town in two streets, Kaiser-Friedrich-Strasse and Bis-marckstrasse. We lived at Bismarckstraße 9 in Mr. Spangenberg's teacher's apartment on the second floor. On the second floor, an artist couple and their daughter were lying shot to death in their beds. Their faces were already black. My husband had to carry them downstairs with Mr. Flicker, wrapped in the bedsheets, where they lay on a lawn for several days before they were buried.

The residents of the two streets from the old town had to get water for cooking from a small pump on Kaiser-Friedrich-Straße.

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There we stood in line for hours, because the water often ran out very quickly. The electrical installations were destroyed.

A 45-year-old teacher told me that she could no longer stand the constant rapes of the Russians - 20 to 30 times a day. The Russians raped her, not caring that she slept in the same bed with her 81-year-old mother! It was just terrible, no woman was spared!"

Mrs. E. S. from Rössel (East Prussia):

"Around February 20, 1945, fixed units came to Rössel. With that we became a garrison town. Day and night there was looting. There was no end to the rapes. Many women, e.g. Mrs. B., asked Dr. N. of the hospital for poison. He did not give it. Among those viciously maltreated were children of 13 to 14 years, such as the 14-year-old daughter of W. F. and the 13-year-old daughter of merchant V. M. My friend E. W. was brought to her mother by Russian soldiers; she was so weak that she could no longer walk and was ill for a long time. A girl from the settlement could no longer bear the rapes, took vinegar essence and died in terrible pain. Another girl hanged herself for the same reason, a refugee woman also. When a Russian appeared at the door, women and girls fled through the windows. Then the Russians surrounded the houses and took their prey.

In the very first days, men up to 50 years of age had to report. They were deported. Among them was Peter Bock. He has died in the meantime. Later, the older men were also taken. Some names: My father (60 years old), merchant Kellmann, master butcher Jekosch, master butcher Nieswandt, merchant Klimmeck, city builder Krekel, merchant Hoepfner, postal assistant Zimmermann, slaughterhouse supervisor Naujoks, carpenter Hermann Orłowski, the butchers Luhmann and Bagahn, Polzien (from the Ermländische Genossenschaft), master baker Prill and his wife, city treasurer Wolff, merchant Hünemohr (deceased in the Arkhangelsk camp), lawyer

Dorsch (70 years old, in the Arkhangelsk l. military hospital). April 45, eight days after admission, according to message from pastor Lic. Braun [now English zone], deceased), pharmacist Pessara (came back, died on escape in Germany), plumber Radtke (came back), postmaster secretary Lingnau with three daughters, police constable Kroll with two daughters, master carpenter Schmidt and daughter, teacher Buchholz with two daughters, Mrs. Masuhr (wife of mayor - had false passport), Mrs. F. (child mentioned above ~ father W. F.), Lilly Peto, Gertrud Käse, Frau Sistermanns (came back), Fräulein Maria Wirdel (came back, lives with her mother in Westphalia), Fräulein Gitta Harwardt (came back, lives in Westphalia), Frau Lowitsch, Frau Schwark, Tischlermeister Dedner and two daughters." -192-

Mrs. I. K. from Eichfief, district Deutsch Krone (Pomerania):

"On February 28, 1945, after about an hour, our girl Anna Zutauska, a Ukrainian, came to me in the basement and said, "Mrs. K., come, you don't have to be afraid, the Russians won't hurt you." I was shaking all over, she took my arm, we went out into the street. A tank came, I saw Russians for the first time. Anna Z. waved, the tank stopped, they greeted each other shaking hands. Anna Z. said to me, "Now everything, everything is over, now everything is good."

I had calmed down a bit and was thinking about my child who was with my parents who lived 3 km away from the village. Anna Z. was ready, after a short conversation with a Russian superior who gave permission, to go to my parents at my request to see if they had survived everything well. Anna Z. drove toward the end of the village with her horse and sleigh. Soon a villager brought our horse and sleigh back to me. Our girl Anna Z., however, had been shot by Russians.

Several times a day Russians visited us and took watches and rings and such jewelry. I had only my handbag with money and securities. The Russians examined us closely, and already in the evening some of them came to our room, "visited us again and pushed (us) out the door, one by one, man or woman. The door was slammed behind me. Two young girls and a young woman, heavily pregnant, refugees from the Wartheland, had to stay behind. A shot rang out in the room, a girl cried out. The rest of us, probably about 15 people, were pushed through a dark room to the street, where a Russian guard with a raised machine gun stood guard in front of us. We all thought that now our end had come. But after about 30 minutes we were allowed back into the room. I was very surprised when I saw not only the Russians but also the two young girls and the young woman sitting there. One of the girls came to me and said, "We suffered for you. I had three Russians in this tent." I could not quite understand at first. But when after some time I noticed how a Russian asked one of the girls "Come with me" and disappeared with her into the adjoining chamber, I knew what was going on.

So it went on all night. The two young girls and the young woman had to suffer especially from the rape of the Russians. The young pregnant woman was already panting, leaning on an armchair, a strand of hair hanging in her face. Who should protect her, everyone then feared the brutality of the Russians. If one did not follow their request, they did not hesitate to point the rifle at one. In the morning this troop of Russians left. Since the streets were now somewhat quiet, we quickly took the opportunity to see how the others had fared. My sister-in-law Erna Redemann had -193-

a Russian shot a girl who had fled to her from the Warthegau, because she had not obeyed the Russian's summons. My friend Margarete Redemann, the daughter of Gustav Redemann, who had been shot, had poisoned herself. The corpse had been wrapped in cloth and placed in the barn. But the mother and the two sisters, Liselotte 20 years old and Ruth 17 years old, as well as the aunt Ottilie Redemann, Mrs. Neugebauer with three small children, Mrs. Patoneck with daughter-in-law and grandsons, altogether 17 persons, burned with the house. The cause and the process of this fate is still unknown to us all. Also the somewhat feeble-minded worker of the farmer G. Redemann, Paul Krause, was found dead in the cowshed under the cow crib with his belly cut open.

Many inhabitants left the village, and so my sister-in-law and I also fled to my parents, who owned a farm 3 km from the village. We found everything healthy. The Russians had also been with them, but had done no harm, taking jewelry and some clothes with them. In the neighborhood seven men had been shot. Behind the stable lay the farmer Paul Reetz and his son Leo, as well as the farmer Walter Manthei and Degner. In his garden lay the farmer Georg Nowack with his head sawed off. Russians and a Pole who worked for a neighbor allegedly came to the Seck family's room in the evening, shot the woman and took Mr. Seck all the way to the village and shot him. The mayor Willi Tarn from Eichner also lay dead there."

K. W. from Tempelburg, Neustettin County (Pomerania):

"The following morning, March 5, 1945, the landlord opened the house and gateway at 8 o'clock, 5 minutes later the Russians had already taken my horse away. Others squatted on the wagon to loot. Every 10 minutes the parlor door opened. Russians appeared, one by one and in smaller groups, always pointing their rifles at our chests, to search us again and again from top to bottom for watches, knives and other valuables. The last things we took with us were snatched from the wagon. Soon we learned details from the city. In the course of the morning the landlord came back to the room from his garden and told that there were four corpses (men and women) lying in the garden under a tree, while three corpses were hanging in the tree. That night there were between 200 and 300 corpses in Polzin. Exact details could not be obtained.

Shootings took place on a daily basis during the first period. An entire family of doctors was shot because the doctor was said to have given preferential treatment to Germans when treating the sick. The father of a woman living in our house was shot because he was said to have secretly listened to the radio in the cellar at night."

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Mr. G. J. from Rackow, Neustettin District (Pomerania) "In the course of the morning of March 4, 1945, Russian orders came: Trecks back. Of my trek only two wagons were still together. The rest were scattered and destroyed. On the way back we had to pass through Schi-velbein. There was still a fire in the town, and the roads were closed. So we stopped before Schivelbein on a small estate (Neu-Schivelbein). Here we lay until March 6, 1945, when a short shelling took place. After this Russian soldiers came to the farm and all Germans had to leave. Several families were still lying there. Now we went to Schivelbein. Here all the carts had to stop in a school yard. In front of the school all the refugees had to line up, and on order everything went into the school. At the entrance came a new order: Men upstairs in a room, women with children downstairs in a room, and young girls in an adjoining room.

Now followed a night of terror! The classrooms were originally set up as a military hospital, but now without lighting. A civilian pole, with a red and white bandage on his arm, would often come into the women's and girls' room with a lighted candle or flashlight, pick out some young women and girls, and ask them to come along. If they refused, they were asked more forcefully and threatened with a pistol. Screaming was then heard from another room. According to statements of those who returned, the women and girls had to go into a cellar room and were raped by enemy soldiers. More often the Pole also came with two or three Russian soldiers, had alcohol with him, drank and sang, and then took some women and girls with him. Among these unfortunates were two well-known women from Tempelburg. According to her, one of them had lost her 12-year-old son the previous day during the shelling of Schivelbein and was left alone with her little daughter to her fate. Shivering from hunger and cold, she asked my wife for a pair of gloves, which she was fortunately able to give her, and also some bread. This poor woman in her misery and pain for the lost child was often taken away with her friend during the night. On one return, the friend cried out with a cry for help, "A bomb could only redeem me." So it went on all night. Eyewitnesses to this were my wife, my mother-in-law as well as my sister-in-law and various other women from our village. The other women were unknown.

We men also had no peace. All night we were searched for watches and valuables. Among us was also the owner of the manor of Kölpin. He must have been over 70 years old. He was taken out of our room by Russian soldiers. After a short pause, a shot was fired. According to my wife, the next morning an old man lay with wel-

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The old man, dressed in a jacket, with a big beard and long boots, was dead in the corridor. From this description, we can assume that it was probably the old man. When we men were brought from upstairs, the body was covered with a canvas."

Pastor Barckow from Lauenburg (Pomerania):

"In packs they stood in front of every house, up to 45 they raped a German woman, without regard if she was finally dying. 78-year-old women, 9-year-old children fell victim to them - it is understandable if in that terrible night about 600 inhabitants voluntarily went to their death.

Sunday morning continuation of looting and rape. "Woman, come!" - who did not comply was shot."

Mrs. E. H. from Luggewiese, Lauenburg County (Pomerania):

"Suddenly, on March 10, 1945, a neighbor came running screaming that the Russians wanted to take her away. Then two Russians came in and said, "Woman, come!" and grabbed the hands of two women. They screamed

and begged so much that the Russians let go of them and went on their way.

Immediately after that, a big Russian came in. He didn't say a word, looked around the room and went all the way to the back where all the young girls and women were sitting. He only waved his finger once at my sister. When she didn't get up right away, he stepped close in front of her and held his submachine gun against her chin. Everyone cried out loudly, only my sister sat there silently, unable to move. Then there was a

the shot was already fired. Her head fell to the side and the blood ran in streams. She died instantly without making a sound. The shot had gone from the chin to the brain, the top of the skull was completely shattered.

The Russian looked at all of us and left the room without saying a word. We laid my sister to rest in the cemetery in Gr. Damerkow."

Retired teacher Waldemar Birkhoven from Eichhagen, Cosel district (Oberschi.):

"The Russians pushed through to the district of Neustadt O/S on 15. 3. 45. In Eichhagen they shot a woman who was fetching water. The farmer Ferdinand Garbas had hidden in the cellar and was murdered in a bestial manner. The farmer Johann K. was led out of the house, had to lie down in a ditch and was shot in the neck. His 69-year-old mother, who was in the cellar, was raped. Mrs. Anna Maicher, 66 years old, was beaten with the butt of a rifle. Various women and girls were raped. In Medmitz the situation was similar.

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Farmers Pollak and Kioltyka with son were found shot in the air-raid shelter. August Thomas, Valentin Miotzek lay shot on the road. Agnes Grzezista lay shot in the ditch. In the nurse's helmet the matron lay dead in bed in her blood. Two old gentlemen from Berlin, who had sought shelter here, also lay dead in their beds. More than 30 people were killed in Mechnitz.

Near the village Deutsch Rasselwitz in the district Neustadt O/S the Russian closed the ring ...

The Russian sent the treks in the cauldron home. He took away the good horses and gave bad ones in exchange. Some people caught free-roaming horses and were able to drive back with them.

Of the men who returned to Eichhagen, 20 were deported to Russia on April 7, 1945, one of whom returned ... "

Mrs. Charlotte Hederich from Rospitz, Marienwerder District (West Prussia):

"In mid-March we had to work hard, washing Russian laundry, and in return we received the Russians' leftover food. We spent three weeks of terrible experience there, tormented by vermin, without drinking water and without sleep at night. Doors and windows were smashed, and we were at the mercy of these beasts. I will never forget the wailing of a young teacher's wife who had given birth to her first child on the way and had undergone breast surgery. Again and again the Russians tore off her bandage, suspecting camouflage, nevertheless the mother-in-law kneeled and begged for mercy. A farmer from East Prussia, whose wife had died on the way, had three daughters. The youngest daughter was 13 years old. He kept throwing himself at the Russians to protect his children. Then these brutes got rid of him and we never saw him again. The women were beaten senseless to make them compliant, even old women over 80 years old were among them. One night 30 Mongols came, totally drunk - it is impossible to reproduce what took place."

Mrs. Brigitte Pajain from Gdansk - Langfuhr

"Around 5 o'clock in the morning on 27. 3. 45 it finally became quieter. The Russians had gone to sleep, and I ventured out of my hiding place. The stuffy cellar air drove us out into the open. An unforgettable picture presented itself to us: our house was a sea of fire! We looked into the embers, moved, distraught, even uncomprehending. Only moments later, we began to shiver from the cold, despite the immense heat that radiated toward us. We went back to the cellar.

Later, the sisters' house also began to burn, and the Russians drove us out of the small chapel where we were waiting for our end. In no time we were an endless procession of people rolling forward, accompanied by

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Russians who urged to hurry with shooting and roaring. All the men were picked out of the train, they were gathered and later taken to camps. So we were left with only women, children and old men. I had neither a backpack, nor a bag, nor any luggage, just as I had hurried away from our apartment, over my dress an apron and

then the old long coat that my sister had given me, so I went along with my mother in this misery train. Many of the fugitives still dragged some belongings with them, which they threw away from time to time because they became too heavy. The longer we walked, the more the children screamed and the old men lay down, kicked and beaten by the Russians. We often just walked through burning streets, it looked as if some streets had been set on fire by force, because the houses burned evenly and at the same time. I also saw cords of cable that had been pulled from house to house.

We got as far as Oliva, then we couldn't go any further, and it was back. More and more people came, thousands we were. Until dark we walked along unknown paths, through forests. Guns and tanks rolled past us. It started to rain, maybe it was 11 p.m., none of us had a watch. We had to lie down on the spot. The forest floor was wet and cold, but no one resisted. Then came countless Russians, our escorts. They stepped over our bodies and picked out their victims with lamps. Screams rang through the night when the women were dragged to the campfire. In between, the Russians shot through the air as they struggled. I was miraculously not discovered again, although the boots of the Russians pressed on my head and arms

I don't know how many days this march lasted, to us it seemed an eternity. More and more women, children and old people were left behind, again and again trucks came, into which young girls were pushed to collect them for Siberia. Cruel the helpless cries of these girls."

That was Königsberg

At the time of the Red Army invasion, Königsberg was home to over 80,000 civilians, mostly old men, women and children. In June 1947, there were only 15,000 Königsbergers left in the city. Barely about 1000 had managed to escape by crossing the green border. According to official estimates of the Soviet administration, about 5000 were shot. A part of the population, which could not be identified by the Soviet authorities, was deported to the East for forced labor in 1945/46. It might have been about 10 000. The others from Königsberg died of starvation.

The Soviets, advancing against Königsberg from the east, bypassed the city to the north and sealed off the Frische Haff to the west. When he-

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he suburb of Metgethen fell into their hands. All this time the heaviest artillery, mortar and Stalinorgel fire was on the city, which was additionally bombarded with bombs of all calibers. On Sunday, April 8, the Soviets, with strong, superior forces, succeeded in breaking through the HKL in several places. The fate of Königsberg was sealed. On April 9, General Lasch, in order to avoid further bloodshed, surrendered the defenseless, shattered capital of East Prussia.

The following account of the experiences of Mrs. Elisabeth F. is better suited than any other to describe the fate of the Germans in the East. Her name and address are known to the author.

"By the end of January, the Königsberg cauldron had already been closed. I, too, like many others, had planned to flee to the West, despite the grandiloquent posters of the Gauleiter Erich Koch "East Prussia cannot be evacuated !". However, my father did not want to give up his small business, my old mother again did not want to leave my father alone, father, who had always been good to me, said when I wanted to say goodbye: "Do you want to leave us all alone? Now I just could not bring myself to abandon the old people. So I stayed in Königsberg with my 12-year-old son Klaus. Only later did I learn that one of my two sisters had also stayed behind.

Day and night the bombs hailed, and soon the impacts of the artillery and the launchers crackled in all the streets. When you caught up with them, you never knew whether you would get home at all. I lived in the large apartment block Alter Graben 37/38. Eventually I became so frightened that we, my son and I, took refuge in the Unterhabersberg bunker. This bunker was considered particularly reliable because the heavy anti-aircraft gun at Horst-Wessel-Platz, which was apparently much feared by the Russian airmen, was located nearby. The way there was harrowing. We walked through the streets after wrapping our faces with wet cloths. The houses were on fire. In Cranzer Allee, the barracks were ablaze, as were those in Ponarth.

Any connection with my parents and my sister was abruptly severed. In the bunkers, a life of its own soon developed. Crowded together with the fewest possessions, hundreds and thousands of women and their children lived in cramped quarters. The air was barely bearable. A pregnant woman gave birth to a child in the crowd, without medical help, others had screaming fits, and an old man died of a heart attack. Outside, however, the

earth thundered under the impact of heavy Soviet weapons.

Today I cannot understand it: We all still hoped for rescue. If someone had dared to declare that Königsberg was not on any de- -199-

I'm afraid we would have beaten him to death. One rumor followed another. And how we clung to every rumor! Only with difficulty could we listen to the often disturbed radio news. We always interpreted them optimistically. And no one told us the truth.

In February, the flak at Horst-Wessel-Platz received a number of Soviet bomber direct hits and failed. Most now ran out of the bunker, on which the Soviet bombers concentrated with all their might. I, too, ran out into the open with Klaus in a brief pause between two waves of attacks, and we searched our way over the often still glowing rubble, through the burning streets. My apartment was without windows and badly damaged, but amazingly the apartment block was still standing. After one night, I realized that I could not stay here and fled with the child to the bunker of "Beton- und Monierbau" on Alter Graben. Again we lived day after day, night after night, crowded together, but we felt somewhat safe. It was a horrible mistake. On April 7, despite my prohibition and pleas, Klaus had run off with other boys, as children are wont to do.

We were all already suffering from severe hunger, and in our bunker only French prisoners who had been assigned as laborers had anything to eat. But they shared what they had with us and behaved quite decently. Suddenly I was lifted up by an invisible force and thrown against the wall. For a moment there was dead silence. A cloud of dust, smoke and stench filled the bunker. It had received a direct hit. One part was completely shattered. To describe effect beyond my ability Hundreds of people had literally been crushed and torn apart. Suddenly we were all screaming like lunatics. I thought that now we would all have to die. In addition, the water pipe had burst, and the water was rising frighteningly by the minute. Several minutes had passed from the impact to the moment I even realized what had happened, yet the water was already reaching my calves. There was only one exit left. All the hundreds of survivors, half insane with fear and horror, were crowding towards it. Those who stumbled and fell remained lying. The crowd of people poured over him.

Then the first cry of despair sounded from the entrance. Polish workers, who had observed the impact, had run up and pushed vehicles and everything else in front of the exit, thus barricading our escape route. They wanted to drown us like rats.

But the children who, to our great good fortune, were outside, including my Klaus, had seen this villainy and had run to a German pioneer group that was struggling to build a taxiway for the vehicles -200-

in a street nearby. The latter, under the command of a sergeant, stormed in with a fury, and whoever of the Poles was not quick enough to leave was shot on the spot. Although the Soviet planes started new attacks, the sappers did not let up and cleared the entrance. More dead than alive, we staggered into the open. I don't know how many were left behind. More than half, for sure. The women now fled through the burning streets. I ran with a larger group to the bunker of the Rathshof spool factory. Here we experienced for the first time what hardship and desperation can do to people. Since the bunker was already overcrowded, they wanted to deny us entry. So we had to storm it, in the true sense of the word.

The Russians are here!

Thousands of us were now standing in the bunker, pressed together like pegs. The detonations roared continuously. If one fought one's way to the bunker entrance, one could already clearly hear the rifle and machine gun fire. Some still hoped that relief troops would fight their way in. In reality, the Bolsheviks were already inside the city. Again a night and a day passed. Around noon on April 9, Polish civilian workers entered and shouted, "The Russians are here. Leave luggage inside, everybody out !"

We looked at each other. Everything that the radio and the newspapers had written came to us in one fell swoop. However, it was to be far surpassed by reality.

Shots whipped from the entrance. The Russians, who did not dare to enter the bunker, simply shot in. The women cried and screamed and began to push up the bunker stairs like puppets. In the midst of them, I too, my son pressed convulsively against me, strode up. My knees were trembling. Before I could get used to the bright daylight, a Russian ripped off my wristwatch. The Soviets crowded to the right and left as if to form a trellis through which we had to pass. Again and again the questions rang out, "Ur jest?" Whoever resisted the removal of watches, rings and other small jewelry lost his life instantly.

The scenes that I cannot forget, even if I lived to be a hundred years old, began in public. I know it is not considered fine to talk about it. The finer the ladies and gentlemen in the West are, the less they want to hear about it. Every one of the women, and there were about 3000 of us in this place alone, who looked halfway to something, was ver- -201-

powerful. In public and in broad daylight. The children cried and screamed. Whoever of the women resisted was simply shot. I did not fight back either.

But when there was no end to it and more and more new Russian piles were streaming in, many tried to escape, because there were a lot of bushes nearby. But only now we noticed that Soviet airmen were constantly circling over the area. When I tried to hide in a group of bushes with some women, they immediately fired their cannons at the fugitives and dropped small bombs on them. Many collapsed, covered in blood. The others, however, ran back to the group. Among them was also me with my child.

Now we were herded into a column and had to start a foot march. We thought no more and no less than that we were to be transported to Siberia. But it was not so. We were only on one of the infamous propaganda marches, which not only the rest of the inhabitants of Königsberg had to take part in, but to which our compatriots from the province were also rounded up. Anyone who still had anything of value was deprived of it. The ranks were systematically "felted". Later, Russian newspapers said that Stalin reported about it in Moscow as follows: "The grateful population presented their liberators with rings, watches and jewelry. "We were herded across the Holländer Baum station to the railroad bridge. There lay a large number of women in confused heaps, there were thousands of them, no one can say exactly. They were dead. Whether they had been shot or killed by bombs, I don't know. We assumed that they had been gathered here.

The whole Pregel swam full of dead women. In the water the dresses and the yellow, red and blue knickers formed a gruesome picture. How these many corpses got into the Pregel, I can't say and I can't explain.

The new railroad bridge had been blown up. A pioneer bridge had been built next to it, and we were driven over these swaying beams. Those of us who had somehow been able to save an object of value in spite of everything, now threw the things into the Pregel. Many women parted with their wedding rings with frozen faces. In harbor basin 3, we were herded into a dark house that had apparently served the harbor operations in the past. It was completely dark. We couldn't see each other, even though we were standing close together, and we thought the Russians were going to blow up the house. But step by step we went forward, and then we realized that we were being pushed through a long corridor. I don't know how long I was there. We all didn't care either. I know -202-

only that I was suddenly standing in front of a narrow corridor window illuminated by Hindenburg lights.

Do you love Hitler?

Behind the window sat a woman and a man, but in civilian clothes. Obviously they were Poles or Eastern workers, but they spoke fluent German. Perhaps they were also German Communists. They asked each and every one of us if we loved Hitler.

We shook our heads wordlessly. I don't think any of the women acted differently. Finally we were asked to give gold, money or rings, but they hardly received anything. Then we were herded on. We came out into the open again and were led across the Nassen Garten, past the Kraftfahrkaserne. Above the road were trees which apparently German sappers had blown down as tank traps. Some of the women now tore themselves loose, gymnastics on the trunks, rode on them and laughed, screamed and cried. They had gone insane. To the right of the Kraftfahrkaserne the entire meadows had been submerged, and while in the Pregel mainly women had floated, here hundreds and hundreds of dead German soldiers, but also civilians and even children floating in the water.

Russian officers with broad epaulets roamed the edges of the flood plain. They had poles and thick clubs in their hands, dragged the dead to the shore, turned them over and searched them for watches or rings. We, however, moved on. Some of the women wanted to leave. But our train, as if hypnotized, drew larger and larger columns of Russians, and every woman who exited was raped. On the train itself one was still reasonably safe. So it happened that the women no longer dared to leave, and soon our train stank terribly.

Somehow it became night. We had come via Ponarth-Schönbusch. The group I was in was squeezed into a huge glass house of a nursery there, no one could sit down, they had squeezed far too much into it for that. The glass house itself was besieged all night by Russian soldiers, and each of the women wanted to get to the center with

all their might, because there they had the most peace. The pictures of that night cannot be reproduced. The next morning we went via Godrienen to Löwenhagen. As far as I know, we had now moved about 35 kilometers. Of course, no one had given us anything to eat. Again and again we tried to get hold of wruks, fodder beets and potatoes from the nearby windrows, which we devoured in raw state. The result was a few hours later a de- -203-

statutory dysentheria. Now the new Soviet columns arriving again and again tore off our clothes and coats, since we no longer had any jewelry. Those who had the misfortune to wear better shoes were stripped of them. Many of us marched barefoot. Some were stark naked, wrapped only makeshift with blankets in which holes had been cut.

The first suicides began. Dozens of women drowned themselves in the water bodies of the Schönfließer Allee. In a forest near Löwenhagen we were finally allowed to rest. My 12-year-old boy, who had witnessed all this just like the other children, looked at me with eyes that did not belong to any child. The first thing he said was a plea: "Mummy, shoot me!" Crying, I tried to make the boy understand that I didn't have a gun after all. Then we went on again. Our wretched procession passed through Steinbeck, Gutenfeld airfield, Krausenhof, Jerusalem, until it reached Schönfließer Allee. On the left of Jerusalemer Straße we stopped. We were interrogated one by one in an allotment garden house by officers, probably NKVD. Klaus and all the children were separated from us.

I had seen my reflection in the water of the ponds in Schönfließer Allee and almost didn't recognize myself. Was that still me? Had hardly 48 hours really passed since the inferno had befallen us? An old woman next to me said, "You must smear your face with dirt. " I did. The officer who heard me was amazingly well dressed and smelled like cologne on meters. He snapped at me, "How old?" I realized then that we were to be sorted out. I looked him in the face with the courage of despair and lied: "75 years." He let me step out on the left. The younger ones, that is, those who gave their age correctly, were now assigned to some forced labor. I joined a group of 28 women who were assigned a room in the Büssing auto repair shop on the corner of Schönfließer Allee and Pr.-Eylauer-Strasse. The room was so small that each mother with her children only had a space of two and a half square meters. We now tried to settle in as best we could.

But our misery did not stop. Already during the night the Russians smashed the door panels, and when we threw ourselves against the door, they shot that we let it be. The 14-year-old Anni, whose parents had had a bakery in Käferstraße, was raped 48 times in the first night, so that she could not sit down for weeks. Her father, as a capitalist, had been shot on the spot, and her mother later starved to death. We tried to help ourselves by putting the very old mothers in armchairs in front of the door, who tried to prevent the Russians from entering. But even that was of little help.

Nobody gave us anything to eat. The few old women went away to organize something. They always brought a few old cabbage stalks or some fodder beets, which we cooked into a soup. Flour and fat

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we did not have. The first of us starved to death. Everything happened very quickly. The elders, the sick and the weakest were taken by a kind death. Mostly they fell asleep silently and without a word. We buried them next to the house. The overwhelming majority of the people of Königsberg probably felt the same way as we did. Perhaps one or the other had wisely buried something or hidden it in the ruins. But whoever had something, kept it like a precious treasure. I spent almost a month in this miserable community. We all had lice, and soon a new guest joined us: scabies.

Gunned down on the street

In those days I met the first Russian who was a human being. One day he stood in the room and looked at us silently. We thought of the usual and stared at him wordlessly. But he reached into his briefcase and gave us two loaves of bread. The children began to tremble, and for the first time we did not cry out of despair. It was the Russian doctor, Lieutenant Nikolas Boris. He kept coming, but quite irregularly. If it hadn't been for him, we might all have starved there. Because there was no food anywhere. All supplies to the town had stopped.

The Russians had claimed before the invasion that they would take care of all the people. But that was a hoax. There was no medical care either. On April 11, when the fighting was long over, the Russians had burned down the large Hospital of Mercy, which belonged to the Königsberg Deaconess Motherhouse. One could not walk around the city as one wished either. Again and again people were shot for no reason at all. I knew nothing about

my parents and nothing about my sister. At that time my old father had already been shot as a "capitalist". In August, an elderly Russian who did nothing to us told me about an atomic bomb in Japan. Despite our terrible misery, we were very excited and I ran across the street to Mrs. Margarethe Pilger, with whom I was acquainted, to tell her. But no sooner was I with her than one of her children came and told me that the GPU was standing in the street and rounding up the women. It was strictly forbidden to stay in any other quarters than the one one had been assigned. Mrs. Pilger became terribly upset and asked me to leave so that we would not be punished. I immediately left the room and ran across the street, it was at most 40 to 50 meters from my quarters. An NKVD soldier shouted, "Stoj!" I thought I would make it, since I was right in front of the entrance to our quarters. Then he jumped at me and stabbed me in the back with his bayonet. I didn't know what to do, stopped, the NKVD- -205-

The man yanked me around and ran the bayonet he had in his hand into my right breast from above. I collapsed and remained lying in the middle of the street. The wounds hurt me, and I felt blood running all over me. Two or three more NKVD men came running up and hit me with their boots in the side, nose and left eye. I again suffered severe injuries and almost lost consciousness. At the same time they spat at me continuously. Women of my quarters saw the scene from the window, and one ran into the yard where my boy was. She shouted to him, "Your mother is bleeding to death in the street!" Klaus ran to a Russian naval officer for whom he occasionally did minor work such as shining shoes and the like and from whom, well he liked my boy, he occasionally got something to eat. He therefore went along with Klaus and wanted to talk to the NKVD men in a friendly manner. But they chased him away. In the meantime I had become unconscious. When they had collected enough women, they beat me awake again and pulled me up. They loaded me up with a box of nails that must have weighed 20 pounds and forced me to carry the box. I couldn't do it and collapsed. But when I was beaten again and again, I managed to do it. How, I do not know. Finally they threw me into a large cellar in the Schönmeß city garden that was overcrowded to breaking point. The room was filled with women. I was at the end. Still, there was no room for me to lie down. I had to stand in the crowded crowd. Finally fate had mercy on me, I collapsed and lost consciousness. For two days and two nights I knew nothing of myself. When I regained consciousness, I cursed the Lord God in whom I had believed with such fervor since childhood. No one could get out in that room. It was maddening. At the entrance there was a hole in the door panel. A guard stood there with a machine gun cocked, and no one was allowed to speak a word. I learned that railroad workers, postmen and soldiers were locked up in an adjoining room. Finally the women managed to get something done about me, because everyone feared that I would die among them. In the middle of the night I was taken out and led away by four Russians, who had their bayonets fixed, and a Polish interpreter. I was only half conscious. All I know is that we walked for almost half an hour, but I still don't know where we were going.

The Soviet officers began to laugh

At the end we stood in a former mortuary. Boards were nailed over the mortuary stretchers. They obviously served as desks. A

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Soviet colonel shouted at me that I had resisted the Soviet power. I silently showed my wounds. The Soviet officers all started laughing loudly as if I had made a good joke. Finally, the colonel said, "What are you doing in the streets if they don't have a 'pravka'." That is a bill that entitles one to walk on the street. I didn't know how to answer.

Finally I had to go all the way back again with the five men and staggered down to the cellar more dead than alive. I did not return to the old room, however, but to the railroad men and soldiers. They had a green sofa bed in their room, bedded me down on it, and since I was already running a strong fever, they poured cold water on my already festering wounds. I'm sure they meant well, but they did me more harm than good. Nevertheless, I was finally able to lie down. After a day I was taken to a guard room, where I received my pravka, a yellow slip of paper on which was written in Cyrillic in copying pencil something I could not read. Since I could not walk because of fever and weakness, the Russians summarily released two of the detained women, who now dragged me to my quarters. When the women and children saw me there, they began to cry. Word of the incident had spread, and so my mother and Klaus had found each other again. In the meantime, my mother had been given her

quarters at 12 Mühlenhof l'Estocq Street, and my son was with her.

I now lay helpless in my quarters, but the women were touchingly concerned about me and helped me in wonderful comradeship. The Russian doctor had also learned that I had returned, and now he brought bread and, what was much more important for me, provided me with medical care for the first time. I must honestly say that without this Russian I would have died like an animal. He brought bandages and iodine, and my robust nature helped me so that my wounds gradually healed. The scars, however, I will keep all my life. I could no longer stay in the quarters. Scabies had taken possession of everyone, and I feared that I would also be afflicted by it. So my mother and Klaus took me in, but the whole house was so overcrowded that I could only lie on the open floor, as we East Prussians say, under the "Ukeln", under hay and straw sacks. In the meantime, however, it had become December, and there was a terrible cold on the floor. My sister had invited my mother to her apartment in Speichersdorf, Sodenerweg 14. Klaus, however, stayed with me. As often as he could, he brought me something to eat, it was not too much, and sometimes the women also gave me something of their meager possessions. The hunger became more and more horrible. Everything that had been was eclipsed by hunger. The most terrible thing was that now this hunger audi the comradeship and the solidarity of the women fell victim to -207-

len. Up to now, the women around me had actually stuck together like peanut and brimstone, even in the most terrible hours, helping and supporting each other as best they could. Now, however, even the last thing we could hold on to was falling apart. For a plate of soup, for a slice of bread, one woman denounced another. Even if it was not all of them, there were still more than enough whose souls were destroyed by hunger.

A woman also denounced me to a Russian, later, when this woman also starved to death, she begged me with tears for forgiveness and died under agonizing remorse.

On November 9, I know exactly, it was a Sunday, I could no longer stand the cold on the floor. So I decided to move downstairs to the apartment, since my mother was no longer here, without regard to what would happen to me again. I was emaciated to a skeleton. I could only get around with difficulty on two crutches that a compassionate old man had made for me.

But I did not want to die. I had survived all that. I had my child with me. I knew nothing of my husband, who was an airman in the Luftwaffe. I pondered desperately what I could do now. Then a Mrs. Meson told me that in the forts near Godrienen and near Ponarth there were supply depots of the former German Wehrmacht, in which there were boxes and tons of tube vaseline. These were the frozen ointments that had been intended for the German soldiers as protection against frostbite. Both our thoughts now circled around this Vaseline. The Russian women, who had followed their husbands very quickly, sold potato peels and similar waste at the black market, ten rubles a washbowl. We could only boil these potato peels or lettuce leaves and cabbage stalks. But the vaseline was fat. With the fat we could improve the soup, and even fry the potato peels. Day and night we thought only of the tube vaseline. But the storage facilities were strictly guarded by the Russians, and no one could get in the normal way!

The last resort: insanity

After thinking about it for a long time, an idea came to me. I had to think of those women, on our misery march on April 9 at Nasser Garten. Since they had gone insane, the Russians left them alone. On the contrary. They even shyly pushed past them. Among all primitive peoples, the insane are somehow revered. In old tent the Russian mushiks believed that from the lunatics the demons spoke. So I decided to become insane. Only a few women, especially my 72-year-old mother and Mrs. Meson, I initiated. -208-

Two girls who worked in the factory kitchen of the Richard Anders sawmill in Mühlenhof procured a wash tub. That's why they were along for the ride. Five of us set off. The wash tub was on a handcart, and I sat in the wash tub. We drove to Rosenau and via Ponarth to Godrien. Every time the Russian patrols came or individual Russians stopped us, I screeched out of the tub, pointed to the next broken house - everything was broken anyway - and screamed like a banshee. The Russians were terrified and retreated, cursing. In spite of all the misery, the four women could hardly keep from laughing. So we came up to the half-destroyed fort.

I crawled through the hole of a heavy artillery hit, and then my heart stopped. Tubes of Vaseline lay by the thousands, obviously thrown together in large piles by the Russians. I threw out through the hole what I could manage. When we had the tub half full, a guard who was strolling along shouted at us and scared us away. Thank

God he didn't get that close to see what we had in the tub. We headed back. I sat on the Vaseline and covered it as best I could with my skirt. On Speichersdorfer Strasse, one of the wooden roadblocks that the Russians had erected everywhere suddenly went down close in front of us. The women began to cry despondently. Apparently all was lost. Only my old mother did not lose her head. "Now child," she whispered to me, "now play the madwoman as never before." The Russians were coming toward us with angry faces and machine guns at the ready. We had walked right into one of their infamous roadside traps. I rolled my eyes, ruffled my hair, and shouted and raved in the shrillest treble to it. The Russian officer and his men bounced back. They shouted: "Mnoge messerschla!", which means: a great madwoman! They stopped at a respectful distance from us. And then the great miracle happened. Russian women ran out of the nearby house and brought us their famous cabbage soup in cooking utensils, but it was very fatty and prepared with meat.

My female drivers immediately began to hastily gulp down the food, and since I had never heard that crazy people don't eat, I also gulped down a cooking pot full, but not without screaming shrilly or giggling stupidly to myself over and over again. The Russians and their wives stared at us in silence and let us go without bothering us.

This was all the more significant because the Russian women otherwise harassed us even more than the men. Never before had I seen a Russian woman give a German woman even a crumb of bread. On the rubble heaps, we searched for the German women who had been thrown -209- away by the Russians.

ned potato peels, cabbage and cabbage stalks and other trash. We were rich. We had hundreds of pieces of German frost ointment. And the frost ointment was fat for us, and fat was life. We repeated this theater probably a dozen times. And we always succeeded. Our little eating community was blissful. But I began to realize with fright that I had mastered this role of the madwoman almost too well. Repeatedly, even when I was alone, I found myself chuckling stupidly or rolling my eyes, and soon I realized that I was playing a game that led close to the boundaries that separate the normal from the insane.

It was not possible to bury them all

Of course, these potato peels and all the garbage were not real food. That's why my mother starved to death despite all the effort. She died on November 28, 1945. I stood next to the grave in the Luther cemetery in Schönfließ and did not hear what the pastor Ernst Müller of Ponarth spoke. I had not been able to help my parents, neither my father nor my mother. Nevertheless, I believe that I had done right to stay. If the old people had stayed alone, and I had been somewhere safe, in the West I could not have borne it. I had been able to satisfy my mother's hunger weeks before she died. Now that she was dead, I knew that I had been granted a great mercy by fate.

The gravedigger was the dentist Dr. Baumann from the suburbs, the cemetery inspector who helped him, whose name escapes me, was a professor of our famous Albertina. To me this seemed like a sign of the tent.

Although I had thought that nothing could shake me, the death of my mother had literally thrown me off course. Nevertheless, I took up the fight for the little bit of life again. I put on a white dressing gown and tried my luck as a private nurse. But since all the medicines in the pharmacies and drugstores had been plundered by the Russians and I could not obtain any remedies, I soon had to give up this attempt. Around this time, the death toll in Königsberg had reached its greatest extent yet. It was soon no longer possible to bury the dead in cemeteries, but they were simply buried in the allotments and meadows. Our priest Müller was helpless in the face of the avalanche of the dead, although he worked in a self-sacrificing manner, one can say day and night, often until he collapsed. Of the Lutheran pastors who remained in Königsberg, a number had died: Dr. Lubowski, Weihrauch, Flach, Leidreiter, Schröter, Dr. Reiß, Knapp and many others. Despite this, the survivors in exemplary

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In the same way that the women of the world were doing their pastoral work, many hundreds, if not thousands, had to be buried without spiritual support. Since I was always struggling to give courage to those in despair, despite my own misery, some women, when close relatives of theirs died, approached me and asked me to speak at the funerals. So now I went from one grave to another, praying ahead and trying as best I could to find words of comfort. We had no coffins and not even bags anymore. The first to die almost serially were the old women. But soon it was the women, from 20 to 40 years old, who could no longer stand life. And the small children. The ones who weren't yet able to earn a few bites on their own, usually banded together in stray packs, stealing or

robbing.

Under a ruin I had found by chance a completely tattered prayer book, of which only the leaves from page 34 to 78 could be read. These pages accompanied me throughout the years. Sometimes I got something to eat for it. But often I had to bring the last slice of bread to a deathbed. I no longer lived consciously, but in a formal doze, and when I think back to that time today, it is often as if I had only dreamed it all.

One day, I had just returned from a collective funeral of seven women and children from the allotments of Rosenau, when my sister Anna was waiting for me with a Russian woman. It was the wife of the doctor Pracharin. "You were our best dancer in the dancing school, weren't you?" my sister said, "and Mrs. Pracharin, who lives with me with her husband, told me that they are looking for a dance teacher for the Russian officers' mess." I didn't know what to say. The Russian woman told me that it would not be a bad thing at all. I would be looked upon as an "artist" and as such would be under the protection of the Soviet High Command. After hesitating for a while, I decided to take a look.

I had to go to the former Immelmann barracks, Jerusalem, where an interpreter told me that I would get the big product card and 300 rubles a day. When I asked him what my job was, he said with a smile:

"Dancing." I was to teach the Russian officers European dances. When I still hesitated, the interpreter told me that I would get a pravka signed by the Russian general that would protect me from any harassment in the future. With a heavy heart, I agreed. My work assignment was actually dance instructor. My working hours were from 2 to 6 p.m. every day. I received a confirmation on which it was confirmed with the signature of the division general and stampiglie that the owner of the Pravka was not allowed to be raped. I think I was the first woman in Königsberg to receive such confirmation!

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Every day at 2 p.m., a German booty car now picked me up, and the Tatar driver Massar took me to the officers' mess in Immelmannkaserne. There I was treated amazingly and addressed as an "artist" just like the Russian women.

After all, the earnings were not much, because at that time a loaf of bread, baked with kerosene for lack of fat, cost 150 rubles. But what a wealth it was: bread!

Frieda Schöning from "Arbeiterallee" now became a cook's wife with me, so that we gradually came into an almost unimaginable wealth. Every time I came home at 6 p.m., day after day, often up to three dozen hungry women were waiting, and I was almost always able to bring them something from the Immelmann barracks. What was garbage for the Russians meant for us the greatest happiness and often bare life. In Königsberg, the first, albeit timid, evacuation work began around this time. The Steindamm was cleared by columns of German women, the rubble simply thrown into the ruins.

On Soviet orders, German prisoners of war were demolishing the gravestones in all the cemeteries. From them in the middle of Königsberg the Lenin-Stalin monument was erected. But the living conditions for the great mass had not changed. On the contrary, if an increase was possible, it took place. The mayor of our district, whom the Communists and Soviets installed, a leg amputee of the First World War, named Behrend, who lived in an allotment garden cottage in Mühlenhof, tried in vain to achieve something.

For me personally, things were tolerable according to the conditions at that time. It was a great sorrow for me that my son Klaus, who had now turned 13, had become an interpreter in the Immelmann barracks through the mediation of Colonel Pracharin. The boy was very quick and was soon able to communicate very well with the Russians in terms of language. While on the one hand I was happy that he was now being fed to some extent, on the other hand I could hardly sleep, because I knew that the good Colonel Pracharin was using the boy mainly not as an interpreter, but also for greasing the palms. The Soviet colonel broke into his own regiment's supply depot as often as he could at night, mainly to steal leather and cheese or other goods that were being moved on the black market. My little boy would then lug the stolen goods to the colonel's apartment, who drove up nearby in his car. He literally had to risk his neck for the little bit of food, because the Russian military police did not make much fuss.

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It started all over again

In August 1946 everything was over. One day the Vergewakigungspravka with the general's signature was taken

from me and I was told by the interpreter that it had been strictly forbidden for the Soviet troops to have German Hiwis. Naturally, Klaus also flew out of the interpreter's post. Now the starvation began again. I had given what I had left over to those who urgently needed it. As a result, from one day to the next I had no reserves and was back to the same situation as before. I smeared my face and, disguised as an old woman, rummaged through the rubble heaps for potato peels and cabbage leaves that the Russian kitchens threw away. I was fair game again.

When I came home from looking for work on January 27, 1947, a terrible surprise awaited me; while I was away, German Communists had completely looted my living space. I owned nothing more than what I had on my body. Completely dejected and desperate, I lay down on the bare floor to sleep. I knew that no one could help me. Not even those whom I had helped. Because in them every will to live had died and no spark of courage was left. I no longer had any illusions. And it is not a phrase when I say that I was ready to die. For even my child could no longer help me, as little as I could help him. For him as a boy it was still easier to find anything. I was also too tired to make any decisions.

The next morning, as if driven by a strange urge, I went once again to the floor where I had hidden myself in the cold more than a year ago, when my mother was still alive. I don't know, did I want to hang myself there or say goodbye. Suddenly my eyes fell on a chest leaning against the chimney. I thoughtlessly opened it. To my astonishment, inside were a tuxedo vest and a lady's straw hat. Immediately I made up my mind to sell this hat. I carried it to the black market in Schönfließ, opposite Jerusalemer Straße. In fact, a Russian blond captain's wife, a so-called speculator, approached me soon after.

I demanded 30 rubles. She raised a hue and cry about how impudently the Germans wanted to exploit the Russians, and when she gave me 15 rubles, I let her have it. For these 15 rubles I bought one and a half slices of bread. The half slice I ate immediately, hungry as I was, and the whole one I brought home for my son. Just as I turned around, the Russian woman called after me, "Woman, can you do laundry?" I immediately went with her to her quarters, where I got a few spoonfuls of kasha, and after the Russian woman had made herself of my pravka, the -213-

I had to show her, had written down name and address, she gave me two pillowcases stuffed with dirty laundry. With all my strength I dragged myself back home with the laundry, where my son was waiting for me, dejected and hungry. He had not managed to find anything edible. I gave him the bread and immediately set about washing the clothes. But I was so weak again from this renewed starvation that I went black before my eyes after only a few minutes. So I sent Klaus to the captain's wife and asked her to pay some money or products in advance so that I could wash the laundry clean.

A short time later, my son came back and brought a small broken open jar of pickled sauerkraut that was already fermenting. He said to me, "Mom, you won't get anything from this one." We looked at each other in silence. Then he continued, "Wind out the laundry."

I knew exactly what he wanted. In spite of everything that fate made us carry, I had not taken anything from anyone. Now my starving child stood before me as a tempter. Automatically I went to the wash tub and, without looking, wrung out a few pieces of the soaked laundry. "Don't be like that!" said the boy. "Look at this, it's German laundry anyway." I gave him no answer, and he left with the few pieces of laundry and brought in short tent for it three water glasses of flour, from which we cooked a flour soup. We were lucky, it was really flour, because often the Russian women sold mud chalk instead of flour and cheated us even in our depth.

So the beginning was made. I had gambled away my fate for a few jars of flour. I had become a thief to the robbers. A short time later, Mrs. W., who had formerly been a cook's wife at the Rosenau slaughterhouse, visited me. She advised me to immediately destroy my Pravka and to live under another name. She also offered to help me with the further sale of the laundry. We took some of the wet laundry and carried it to the Luisenmarkt. I got about 1000 rubles for it. For that I bought bread. We ate one of them on the spot, and I brought the other one to my child. It was clear to us that we now had to leave the quarters. I put on everything I had left and the three of us went to the black market, to Quail Lane, and laid out our "goods".

As I was standing there, a hand suddenly came to rest on my shoulder, and as I wheeled around, I was horrified to see a Russian with his bayonet fixed. I immediately thought that my theft had been discovered. But the Russian did not bother with the laundry, with which Mrs. W. and Klaus remained behind. He dragged me into a hallway and locked me up there. My first concern was the remaining rubles I had with me, which, for lack of other means, I -214-

The women were dragged in more and more. More and more women were brought in. Then the Russians put us together in a column and led us to Ponarth-Barbara Street. There we were assigned to a German forewoman, a Communist, whose name was Maria, but who called herself Maruschka. We had to mop the rooms and clean the windows, as well as clean the completely filthy cellars. When evening came, we were finished, and to our amazement we could leave. Of course, we did not get any payment or food.

Fate took its course

On the street I didn't know what to do, but my two co-conspirators were waiting for me at the Schönbusch brewery. Klaus had already learned that the whole thing was harmless. The two had sold everything and traded potatoes for it. We now went, since it was very dangerous to be on the road in the dark, to the Ponarth marshalling yard, because it was the best place to buy bread. Near the station a young Russian bandit, who had followed the Red Army in whole packs, attacked my son and wanted to snatch his backpack. Klaus, however, defended himself. Before we could get close, the youthful bandit had stabbed Klaus in the head with a knife. The wound bled a lot, but fortunately it was not life-threatening. We drove the robber away by throwing stones, but lost a lot of time.

It had become deep night. At any moment a patrol could pick us up. Our fear was boundless. We tried to get into the few remaining houses on Barbara Street, but no one took us in. Everyone was afraid to take in strangers, because it was strictly forbidden not only by the Russians. Gradually, whole gangs of robbers and murderers had formed, who crept into the countryside in particular, but also into Königsberg, asking for lodging, and in the end robbed and sometimes even murdered their lodgers. Finally, when we were already in despair, a woman took us in because we showed her our food. Her child had a huge hydrocephalus and was already half starved. The woman's husband had been killed as a lance corporal in Russia. We cooked a flour soup, which the five of us ate, and were allowed to sit in the kitchen for the night in return. The woman herself had only a narrow couch on which she slept with the child.

In the morning we went again to the old Ponarth marshalling yard. First, we wanted to invest the last of our money in bread, and second, we wanted to see if we could not manage to leave the city on one of the outbound freight trains. I have remembered this day. It was the 18th of April 1947. In gro- -215-

The whole station was besieged by masses of women and children. They all tried to escape the Königsberg hell on the buffers and on the roofs of the departing Russian military trains. The Russian military police knocked the women and children off the roofs with rifle butts and thrust bayonets at those who clung to the buffers and running boards. Many fell under the wheels and screamed terribly. Some were silent in a moment. We put all our money in bread, and that was our greatest luck in misfortune.

Suddenly, Russian trucks drove up from all sides like an ambush. Soviet soldiers jumped off and readied their rifles and submachine guns. I realized that we had unfortunately walked into the middle of a raid. We tried in vain to break out and escape our fate. The Russians had us surrounded. The whole mass of people - many hundreds - were now forced into wagons that had already been prepared and were firmly locked. It was a very long train into which we came. Nobody had touched us. Nobody dared to resist anyway. After a while the train started to move.

It was to be many many years before I saw home again and could live among German people in freedom."

A document of rare urgency: The Map of Death from Yugoslavia. Here alone, 80,000 German prisoners of war were taken from life to death under circumstances that can hardly be described.

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German mass deaths in YugoslaviaAn ethnic group almost exterminated

The Tito partisans were even more cruel and sadistic against all Germans who fell into their hands in Yugoslavia. One is almost unable to reproduce this bloody truth.

Dr. Wilhelm Neuner, former President of the Higher Regional Court in Bechkerek and member of the Belgrade Parliament, who had to suffer the harrowing fate of his compatriots, reported:

"The majority of the ethnic Germans who lived in Yugoslavia until the end of the war were of the opinion that

there was no reason to leave their homeland when the German troops withdrew. Therefore, when the Soviet troops entered the country, about 300,000 German civilians remained in Yugoslavia. I, too, was one of them.

At first it seemed that we had done the right thing. The first Soviet troops that entered the Banat, and on October 2, 1944, the capital of the Banat, Gross-betschkerek, did not treat the German civilian population worse than the other nationalities. On the same day, under the name of "People's Liberation Committee", a Yugoslav authority was already formed in the aforementioned city, which, since Belgrade and most of the rest of Yugoslavia were still occupied by the German troops, took local government affairs into its hands, began to negotiate with the Russians and was recognized by them. This authority also included distinguished Serbian citizens, whom we knew were not communists but supporters of the king. In this committee there were also representatives of the Hungarian, Romanian and Slovak minorities. As a German representative, the former chairman of the "Swabian-German Cultural Association" Johann Keks, whose democratic attitude was still generally known from the pre-war period, was appointed to the committee.

Unfortunately, the peaceful cooperation did not last long. On October 10, 1944, after the withdrawal and further advance of the Russian combat troops, the supreme communist rulers sent units of communist partisans into the country. With the appearance of these, the communists seized all power everywhere. The national Yugoslavs, the supporters of King Peter, were eliminated and some of them were imprisoned. A communist dictatorship was introduced, which also ended the previously tolerable behavior of the Serbs towards us Germans

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These communist partisans carried out mass shootings of Germans throughout the country on the very first day of their military dictatorship. In the capital city of Greater Bechkerek, where about 12,000 Germans lived, this took place in such a way that they first surrounded the western part of the city, where mainly the German peasants lived. They entered every house and legitimized all the men.

Wherever they found a German man, he was immediately driven into the Serbian part of town, whereupon they were all shot together - without trial and without reason - on the same day.

Only relatively few German men were spared at that time. I, too, was taken away for liquidation with an 84-year-old neighbor. Only by a lucky coincidence did I escape with my life. However, my father-in-law and five other relatives, all farmers who lived in my neighborhood and were busy bringing in the harvest or working in their farms, were unsuspectingly driven away from their work and shot along with everyone else. The Germans who remained alive at that time were taken some time later, one earlier, the other later, and brought to the concentration camp. People from the surrounding German villages were also brought to the Großbetschkerek camp on a daily basis. Almost every day there were shootings of groups of German people. In the whole Banat, the number of German civilians shot in those first days of the communist dictatorship was about 10,000.

This is how the new Yugoslav regime began its rule. It was not until November 21, 1944 that the "Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation" (Avnoji) met in Belgrade as the supreme governing authority of the new Yugoslavia. On this occasion, the decision was made that all persons of German ethnicity would be deprived of their civil rights and all property. This was done without regard to whether these Germans lived in areas which had been under Hungarian, Croatian, Italian, Bulgarian or German administration during the war.

The treatment of the Germans was summarized in a decree published by Tito's political commissar, Moscha Pijade, in Jajce, which has since been called the "Decree of Jajce".

The three points of the injunction were:

1. All persons of German descent living in Yugoslavia automatically lose Yugoslav citizenship and all civil and civic rights.
2. All movable as well as immovable property of all persons of German descent shall be deemed confiscated by the state and shall automatically become its property.

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3. Persons of German descent may not claim or exercise any rights, or apply to courts or institutions for their personal or legal protection.

With this decision the legal basis for the liquidation of all Germans was created, and the illegalities and mass shootings that had already taken place were thereby sanctioned. The fact that this law was to be understood in this way was later emphasized and proven to us in the camps again and again.

Initially, no attempt was made to give a plausible justification for these outrageous measures. At the meeting at which the above-mentioned decision on the expatriation of Germans was taken in Belgrade on November 21, 1944, the Yugoslav communist minister Zarko Veselinoo gave a speech in which, as the government spokesman, he simply stated that the Germans had to leave the country because they no longer wanted to live together with them. "Svabama medja nama vise nema mesta! "(Germans no longer have a place among us!) read the relevant passage in his speech, which was broadcast on Belgrade radio.

This government declaration was also understood everywhere in such a way that all Germans were outlaws and could be liquidated, regardless of their citizenship. Therefore, regardless of citizenship, the last Germans still living in freedom, including those who were known not to be "fascists," were expelled from their homes and taken to camps. About 50 camps were set up for the approximately 300,000 Germans still living throughout the country. But where in the camps the camp commandants or individual communists or partisans felt like killing people, they could liquidate Germans without hindrance.

In Großbetschkerek, in whose concentration camp I was also first held, there were, apart from countless individual liquidations, in which the former president of the Kulturbund, Johann Keks, was also killed, about ten mass shootings, in which a total of about 750 German people were killed. The number of those who were to be liquidated together in each case was ordered for this as well as for the other camps each time by the government or by a body appointed by it. How carelessly the subordinate authorities proceeded in the selection of the victims can be seen from some examples:

Once, 150 German campers were to be liquidated in our camp by higher order. The camp commander then had all the camp men line up and, without bothering about the names of the individual victims, he simply killed those who happened to be in the column.

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Instead of the required 150, they even counted 154 and had them shot in two groups.

A large part of those shot were Swabian compatriots from the Romanian Banat. Fleeing from the Russians, they had already come on October 2, 1944, through the Yugoslavian Banat to the Tisza, over which they could not go any further because of the destruction of the bridge. They were brought by the Yugoslav partisans to the Großbetschkerek camp. The former German member of parliament Prof. Peter Weinrich from Hatzfeld in Romania was also shot in this group.

When another time the order arrived that 70 Germans were to be liquidated, only old people and those who were sickly were killed. These selected victims were not shot at that time, but were led in small groups from the barracks to the camp yard, where they were beaten to death by partisans.

While doing so, other partisans made music on an accordion. Retired court councilor Dr. Karl Lux from Großbetschkerek was also beaten to death in the camp yard on this occasion. The 70 mutilated corpses were carried away on carts by Italian prisoners of war, who had to sing Italian songs loudly during the liquidation on the orders of the partisans.

When one day the liquidation of 30 Germans was ordered, mostly merchants and such men were chosen who had intelligence professions.

Such group shootings, of which a ready list with the names of the selected victims was received from the government with the order to liquidate them, also occurred. In this way, the former German deputy Dr. Julius Ellmer received the instruction that he was to be killed together with a group of named respected German men. But since the camp commandant had had him liquidated earlier in a group of 70 compatriots, this time another was taken in his place and shot, so that the number prescribed for the day in question would be full.

Strikingly, at the same time in the camp of Panchova, where a total of 1666 German campers were led away in several lots and disappeared forever, the shooting of the former German deputy Dr. Simon Bartmann was expressly ordered by the government on the basis of a list. He was then led out of the camp in a group of 84 Germans, among whom there were also eleven women, tied up and shot on the northern outskirts of Panchova. When one day the communist partisans of the Banater -220-

The German campers from the Großbetschkerek camp were brought there for the celebration.

All thirty were shot during this partisan feast of music and wine.

On another occasion, 35 German men and four women were again sent to the partisans in the village of Ernsthäusen. Immediately after their arrival, these camp men were locked up in a dance hall of the local inn

Georg Schlitter, and the following night, during a partisan entertainment, they were killed by the drunken partisans in the most cruel way. Afterwards, German camp men had to help the partisans to remove the 39 mutilated corpses.

Once again the liquidation of 70 Germans had been ordered. However, the majority of the ethnic German men had already been sold early in the morning from the Großbetschkerek camp as work slaves for the day in question to free people and enterprises or otherwise sent to forced labor far outside the camp. The camp commander then added the 26 Volksdeutsche men missing from the number 70 in such a way that he took Reich German Wehrmacht members from the "Prisoners of War Department" and had them shot in place of the Volksdeutsche civilians. An Austrian who still lives in Styria today expressly pointed out to the commandant on this occasion that these were prisoners of war and Austrian or German citizens. The contemptuous remark "Svaba je Svaba" (all Germans are the same) was the only thing the commandant reacted with.

On May 15, 1945, we were all forced to watch the wanton shooting of a German child. About 300 German men were not at work that day in the Großbetschkerek camp. In addition, 700 women were brought from the women's section. We had to form a semicircle, on one side the men, on the other the women. The chief of the "Ozna" who appeared in the camp called the German boy Walther Minges from Detta in Romania, i.e. a Romanian citizen who had lost his mother on the run and was also kept in our camp as an orphan, to step into the middle of the circle. The child had to kneel down and was killed in front of all of us by a representative of Ozna by two pistol shots in the neck. All of us, however, were forced to come very close and watch closely how Germans were killed. The women, who turned away sobbing, were forced to watch by the partisans standing behind with rifle butts.

After that, the highest Ozna representative gave us a Serbian speech in which he explained that he had the right to have each and every one of us liquidated in exactly the same way, because we Germans had no civil rights, for

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There would be no more freedom for us, and we would only have to work and die in the camp. In order for us to remember this well, a compatriot who now lives in Reutlingen in West Germany had to translate this Serbian speech by the highest official representative word for word into German. About 50 witnesses of this whole event are still alive today.

Even on later occasions, the camp commandants were repeatedly spurred on to toughness towards the Germans by representatives of the government. For example, a large number of high government representatives had also arrived at the Großbetschkerek camp on July 15, 1945. We therefore all had to line up again. The spokesman of this commission then announced to us, in the name of the new Yugoslav government, that at the meetings of the Great Powers in Yalta the expulsion of the Germans from Yugoslavia not been decided. The new Yugoslavia had rather received the right to do with its Germans whatever it wanted. They could have us all shot. We were outlaws. He also expressly stated that we would never be released from the camp and would have to die here.

It is therefore no wonder that individual camp commanders, in view of the described attitude of the highest state authorities, even regarded the rapid liquidation of German civilians as a patriotic act.

In the Rudolfsgnad camp on the Tisza River, where I had been taken in 1946, there were at that time, in addition to a few able-bodied men, 23,000 German women and children. As soon as a few thousand died and there was room again, this number was supplemented again and again by new transports from other camps, which could be gradually "dissolved" in this way. After the dissolution of the camps in Lower Styria, 400 surviving Germans, among whom a large number were Austrian citizens, were also brought here. These people could not stand the unfamiliar swamp climate at the confluence of the Tisza and the Danube, where the concentration camp Rudolfsgnad had just been established, and many of them soon perished.

Incidentally, in this camp they tried to reduce the number of Germans mainly by starvation. On many days the concentration camp inmates were not given anything to eat at all. In January 1946 the camp people were not given a morsel of food for five consecutive days.

Also the small children got nothing, likewise also nothing at all before, on the four immediately consecutive Christmas days, namely from 24 to 27 December. Therefore, 7400 German children and women also died there in some winter months.

On a single day, 113 starved children and women were led out of the camp and, like all victims of this concentration camp, buried in a long ditch on the Hutweide, because even two and three years after the war, by explicit order of the government, Germans, as people without civil rights, were not allowed to be buried like free people in a cemetery. Also the former German member of the Romanian parliament in Bucharest, Dr. Peter Kausch from Modosch, starved to death here and lies in such a mass grave.

One camp commander, however, who held his office here for only three months and was then transferred, even openly bragged at the end of his activity with the words that he was proud of the fact that he had succeeded in the Rudolfsgnad camp by his method in putting 5000 "Swabians" into the ground in a very short time without firing a shot."

From the official documentation a few witness statements:

Johann Wann from Startschowa (Starcevo), district Pantschowa in Banat

"On October 1, 1944, the first Russian patrol arrived in Startshova. An officer of the patrol made a speech. All the Germans were driven away so that they could not listen to what the liberator was saying, when the Serbs and Croats also understood very little of it.

Already on October 2, the local Serbs, Croats and Gypsies took away from our house hay, straw, oats, corn and everything they needed. Everything that was taken away was demanded in the name of the partisans and the People's Liberation Committee. When my father demanded confirmation, they told him to keep his mouth shut if he loved his life. Day after day, under threat, the house was emptied and security became more difficult. Day after day - under pretense that they were looking for weapons and military equipment - house searches followed. Where such things were not found, they just asked what was dear to them. Even children's shoes were treated as military equipment and carried away. To instill even more fear in the Germans, slogans were written on the German houses, for example on the house of the Müller brothers: "All Swabian pigs must be hanged!" - "Death to the Swabian!" On our house it said, "Hitler lives here, he must be beaten to death!" (My father was mocked "Hitler" even before the war.) And: "All German whores must die."

So that the slogans should not remain a dead word, they picked up the first Germans in the night of October 18 and drove them to the community center. There they were beaten, stabbed, their hands broken, and then dragged to the local park and shot. My father had to take them to the horse cemetery -223-

where he had to bury them. The partisans threatened him not to reveal where they were buried! Among the victims were: Ulrich Hans, Jehl Josef, Beck Josef and four other persons whose names I have forgotten. Among the murderers was a member of the Russian army and one of the first People's Liberation Committee, a certain Kljukalo (mocking name), who still lives in Startschowa.

On October 21 a unit of the Sremer Brigade arrived in the village. Only later we found out on our own skin that it was a liquidation detachment. My father was asked by them to lead some partisans by wagons to the Omoljica and Ban. Brestovac. As we were left without horses, he could not make good the request. So he just stayed at home. The habit of noisy partisans aroused bad feeling in our family. But the night has come and we went to sleep.

We had hardly fallen asleep when someone knocked on the kitchen door. (The front gate was never locked because the People's Liberation Committee issued such an order). It was about 9 p.m. My father asked who was knocking so late. The answer was, "In the name of the people, open the door! " When my father unlocked the door, three armed partisans entered the kitchen. They asked if he was the master of the house. My father said yes. The one partisan asked if we had any weapons or military stuff. My father should only answer correctly because if they search the house and find anything, the whole family will be in bad shape. My father assured them that we had nothing and that there had been many searches in the last few days. Then the partisan asked if there was still a man in the house. Yes, there was still my brother, who can be counted as a man because he is 21 years old. Whether there was still a man in the house, the same partisan asked. My mother, who also came out of the room into the kitchen, said no, there was only one child of 15 years left. So, he should also come. When I also came into the kitchen, the one partisan said quite happily, "He is also good for the head! " Mother, grandmother and sisters began to cry. One of the partisans calmed them down by saying, "You don't have to cry. They should only dress well because they will not have the opportunity to come back^A soon We dressed the best and doubled everything. When we were finished, we went out into the yard. Only then did we see that the whole house was guarded with partisans and local civilians all around.

My father, brother and I were the first to be picked out by the partisans in our alley. With about twenty armed partisans and some civilians we walked through our alley. When we came near a German house, we had to stop. Some partisans stayed with us, the others did the same. Our co-

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lonne grew slowly. When we were already six people, we were no longer allowed to speak.

When we came to the end of our alley, there remained one house where Germans lived. It was the house of the Großecker family. As we approached, we heard noise in the yard. Only women and the son Fritz lived in the house. He was only 14 years old and was still in elementary school. As the partisans brought him to us, one of the partisans asked why they were making so much noise when the order was to carry out everything in the greatest silence. Then a partisan said: "Yes, the snotty bastard wanted to run away, and only in the stable did we catch him. Then he bit me, too."

They tied him up right away. As they put us in order in the column, one of the partisans said: "I am an officer; here I have my pistol and my dagger, with which I have already slaughtered many German pigs. Whoever speaks a word, I slaughter; if only one steps out of the column, he dies - and now go! "

They drove us along the alley. In many places we heard shouting of slogans. From this we realized that the whole place was occupied by partisans.

Only when we arrived in front of the Stimac Inn did they start beating us with straps, forks, sticks and rifle butts. When we were pushed through the door, we saw our fate ended in the inn. At an ordinary guest table sat three members of the People's Liberation Committee. In the middle sat the secretary, named Zivulj Lazar, a perpetual student, the son of a peasant from Startschowa. He only asked for the names, and already they pushed us further from the table. There were some partisans waiting armed with sticks, and ordered us to undress, but we can leave our underpants. Yes, clearly said, but difficult to execute. As one stirred, they beat with the sticks. When I wanted to take off my shoes, one of them hit me on the back with a stick so that I fell down. They kicked me and cursed. My shoes were a nice spoil of war, so they finally gave me time to take them off. When I was only in my underpants, I got a new beating. When I had already felt enough of the liberation, they pushed me against the wall. There were already some Germans lined up, some even completely naked. Woe to the one who was in the first row! With rifle butts or sticks they beat us over our stomachs and faces. Some were also stabbed with knives, like Franz Hirschl, who was over 70 years old. The man behind was not in a much better position, because the partisans followed the rows and beat us with rifles and chains over the rows. Some were beaten so hard that they collapsed unconscious, then were washed up (doused with water), only to be beaten again -225-

become, such as Ellinger Paul, Sturm Franz and Wann Stefan. The last one wore glasses. One of the partisans hit him so hard across the face that he lost his eyesight from the glass fragments of his glasses.

When we had been beaten, kicked and stabbed enough, everyone who had had to throw the wedding ring in front of him; then line up in twos. Now we were tied up. The younger ones had to step forward. Where I was the smallest, I had to line up first with Großecker Fritz. At the door they counted us. If the partisan counted well, there were 82 of us altogether. Among them was also a Reichsdeutscher, a member of the Wehrmacht. - So, on October 22, 1944, a total of 82 Germans were shot by the partisans, the youngest of whom was 14 years old and the oldest over 70.

When the partisans drove us into the alley, with constant beating and cursing, Wann Stefan collapsed unconscious. Two soldiers had to carry him. Paul Blaznek, the shoemaker, died on the road. They drove us through the village park, down to the Ried. When we arrived in the Ried, we all had to lie down in the cold water of a brook. Only the one who shouts loudly "Long live Tito!" did not have to do it. Nobody did it! It was very dark, and I said to Großecker, "Come on, let's run!" He didn't dare, I again couldn't drag him along. So I just went along. Not far from the village, at the stream Ponjavic, we had to stop. On one side of the stream the gypsies had already dug a knee-deep trench and were waiting for us with a weather lamp. Fritz Großecker, I, Josef Rupp and Franz Pichner were the first to be pushed to the ditch. Without a word, without judgment, a partisan shot at us with a machine gun.

Today I still don't know whether I was scared to death or whether Großecker Fritz dragged me along, only I fell into the ditch. Only when the partisan shouted: "If one of you German pigs is still alive, he should get up! Only then did I think: "If I get up, he will shoot again. So stay down." I looked at how the others who had been hit

were doing it, and I did the same. I also stretched and twitched my limbs. Again there was a bang! Four Germans fell on me. One of them, named Laban Stefan, pressed my head so hard against the wall of the trench that I thought he would tear my head off. When the ditch was full, they drove the remaining Germans across the stream where my abandoned goat oven was. Into the holes of the goat kiln they shot the others.

When the stream became silent on my part, I loosened the shackle and wanted to run away. Then I saw two partisans coming. I quickly crawled again under the dead and waited. As they came near the ditch, they threw three grenades at the dead and went back.

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Only when I heard that they were firing again on the other side of the creek did I crawl out of the ditch and run away. It was about 3 o'clock, October 22, 1944.

The night was dark. I ran without a destination and arrived back in the village, jumped over fences and stopped in the courtyard of relatives. The house was empty. I had nothing left but to look for pieces of clothes. Unfortunately, the whole house was empty. I was freezing in my blood-damp underpants and found nothing to wear. My body, my hair was covered with blood, and there I looked for water. When I washed my body and hair a little, I searched the house again. A great luck! I found an old woman's skirt that served as my shirt, and an old pair of pants that I later mended with a string and made right. Where the house investigations were frequent and can also arrive here, I had no choice but to dig a hole in the dung heap. I crawled into the hole and covered it up. The warmth of the dung made me fall asleep.

I woke up late at night. I did not dare to go to my mother. I went over fences again and stopped at an acquaintance's house. I wanted him to hide me."

Farmer H. B. from Sartscha (Sarca), Alibunar district in Banat:

"Early on October 2 it was announced by drumbeat that all weapons and uniform items as well as radio sets in German possession must be surrendered. This order was willingly obeyed by the Germans. Whoever displeased the Russians with the delivery of these things was imprisoned.

The village teacher Edmund Geist, who could have escaped, stayed at home, because he told himself that nothing would happen to him because of the Russians, since he had been a prisoner of war in Russia during the First World War and therefore knew the Russian language. Geist was arrested on the very first day, maltreated and interrogated about the German crew. Since he did not make any statements, he was tortured and incarcerated.

The wife of the doctor Dr. Massong was tortured for over a day, because they wanted to find out from her the clothing stocks of the women's society - which in reality did not exist. Her son Richard accompanied Mrs. Massong to prison and did not allow himself to be separated from his mother even there. He therefore had to witness all the maltreatment that happened to his mother.

A certain Dengel Johann was beaten up without cause when he delivered his radio set and was then imprisoned. Johann Eck's wife was also tortured in order to find out the whereabouts of her daughter, who had fled, so that she was unable to give any information. She was also imprisoned. Anna Neuhaus, 30 years old, lived -227

alone in the house where ten Russians were quartered. She went to the community center and asked that the Russians be quartered elsewhere, since it would be unseemly for the Russians to stay with her as a single woman. She was ridiculed, mistreated and imprisoned for this. The merchant Sotrell Matthias was arrested with his wife, tortured and imprisoned because they wanted to find out from him where his money was hidden. The dairy owner Josef Wagner and his wife met the same fate. - By the evening of the second day, 19 people had been incarcerated.

On October 3, at 4 a.m., I heard a squad pass by my house. Later I heard many shots from the direction of the station. I could not imagine what was happening. Later in the morning, the community servant came to me and instructed me to come to the community house with a shovel and a hoe. When I got there, I already found seven other local people with the same tools. Then four more partisans came with guns ready to fire and told us to go ahead in the direction of the railroad station. When we came to the cemetery gate on our way, a partisan ordered: swing right to the cemetery. When we entered the cemetery, we saw immediately on the left a pile of people, that is, a pile of corpses tied together. They had been shot. Then the partisans ordered us to put the bodies into the hole that had already been prepared and bury them there. I was assigned to cut the victims apart. The others

buried them. There we saw that they were the 19 people who had been incarcerated the day before: Wagner Josef and Wagner Magdalena, Sotrell Matthias and Sotrell Maria, Massong Anna and her child Massong Richard (15 years old), Metzger Georg, Geiser Josef, Neuhaus Anna, Kimmel Josef, Eck Elisabeth, Lehn Nikolaus, Dekreon Michael, Lefrang Stefan, Dengel Johann, Hermann Peter, Geist Edmund, Kaip Wilhelm, Krieger Michael.

When the Russian soldiers left after 10 days of occupation, a Russian lieutenant named Arthur stayed behind with us. The partisans and Romanians gave him beautiful women in the village. Every night such women were raped by him. Often he also conducted nightly interrogations, murdering his victims with his own hands by shooting them in the neck. The following villagers fell victim to him in this way and were shot: Weißmann Josef, Wieme Franz, Pfeiffer Matthias, Christmann Jakob, Mayer Nikolaus.

One morning at the end of October, some Russians came to the house of Nikolaus Silier and wanted to rape his daughter in front of her father. The father did not allow this and insulted the Russians. Thereupon they shot the father and called two neighbors, Merle Adam and Schäffer Johann, to carry Silier to the cemetery. There was a boy of 16, named -228-.

Georg Engeldinger, who told the Russians that the two were members of the German team. On this they shot Merle and Schäffer as well. They also shot the boy Engeldinger.

In October two men, Johann Christmann and Josef Schneider, were walking towards the railroad station when Russians and partisans came along the way. A partisan told the Russians that the two men had been with the German team. The two Germans then began to run, were pursued by the Russians, caught up in Josef Steier's garden, shot and also buried.

On December 24, 1944, about 30 young women and girls were deported from Sartscha to Russia. These were women who were able to work and had no children. - At that time it was believed that none of them would return. Fortunately, all but one of them returned to Germany. - Only one man was deported to Russia.

In March 1945, 25 women and girls were again taken to Sremska Mitrovica. Then we said, they are lucky not to get that far; they will certainly stay alive. However, it turned out differently, because 21 of them died."

Mrs. Margarethe Themare from German-Zerne, Modosch district in Banat:

"On October 3, 1944, partisans came to our locality. Russian Turppen appeared on October 5. On October 4, German troops came once again against Zerne, but only as far as Schwabenhof, the estate of the then Obergruppenführer Neuhausen, otherwise also called Juliamajor, and took cattle and food from there, whereupon the partisans withdrew again. They were not regular partisans, but the settlers from the surrounding colonist villages, some of whom had fled to the partisans in the last days, but some of whom had pursued their regular occupation until the Germans withdrew. The leader was a Batschka Serb named Ljubica. She then had her apartment in the Catholic parish apartment, since the parish priest had already been shot on October 5, with 6 other German men. The parish priest was named Franz Brunet, a native of Modosch, the others were: Nikolaus Neumayer, bricklayer; Bela Köstner, lumber merchant; Josef Dekreon, Riemermeister; Michael Wurmlinger, blacksmith; Anton Krettler, windmill owner and Matthias Schleimer, farmer. These men were arrested right after the Russians moved in. They were shot in the community hall. They were buried at Schinderplatz.

Before the Russians arrived, nothing remarkable happened. The Serbs, however, had reached an agreement with the Germans immediately after the partisans had left.

and announce in the village that no one is to be harmed under any circumstances. If the Wehrmacht comes again, no Serbs are to be harmed, and the Germans are to take care of this; if partisans or Russians come, the Serbs are to see to it that no Germans are harmed. A German and a Serb each went from house to house and announced this for reassurance. At our house Hans Jost went with a Serb unknown to me. This agreement was made on October 4, since there was no military in the village.

was.

The next day the Serbs wanted to await the Russians when they marched in and were gathered for that purpose. At about 9 a.m., while they were still gathered, German soldiers entered the village and fired into the dispersing Serbs. In the process, 11 Serbs were killed. The Germans came with cars, and since the partisans were also

running around in various uniforms, the Serbs thought from the coming cars that they were partisans, ran towards them with Russian flags, whereupon the shooting began.

At 11 a.m. the Russians arrived, and immediately afterwards they arrested the seven men, who were then shot in the evening. I don't know whether the men were interrogated beforehand, but I doubt it after everything that happened later.

During the day the Russians just passed through. At night, however, they invaded German houses and looted. The Serbs were looting before that. However, nobody resisted. The Russians raped women already in the first night. The local gypsies did not loot at the beginning, but they also violated women. Russians also came to our house the first night. I, however, was hidden in the straw at the neighbor's house. There was no one in the apartment, but in my husband's tinsmith's workshop. From there they took the available food and bedding from a bed standing there. The rest of the things were all thrown around. That it was the Russians, I was told by my other neighbor, E. S., with whom they were also, looting and raping the woman. There were two Russians, both of whom abused the woman, forcing her to do so at gunpoint.

The next day, Friday, the Russians were joined by the inhabitants of the surrounding colonist villages, who had settled on the former estate of Count Csekonich in 1921. They began to loot under Russian assistance, literally dragging everything away from some houses. In the houses in question they harnessed the horses in front of the wagons and carried away everything with them. The local Serbs participated only very weakly. Allegedly at the intervention of local Serbs, the looting was stopped on the same day.

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On the same day German men were led away and shot in the community center. - During the night the rapes on the part of the Russians were much less.

Saturday afternoon, two local Serbs, armed with rifles, came with a woman from the neighborhood and took us three women, who were in the courtyard, to the community center. When we got there, there were already 11 women present. Just as we got there, they brought out the first dead body from the cellar, which was thrown on the cart. A Serb about 17 years old and a gypsy told us to sing, otherwise we would be shot. Thereupon we sang a song, then we sang a second one, and we repeated this until all the dead were loaded onto the wagon. There were five men. But we were not allowed to see who they were, and only later, on the way back, did we hear from an escort that Josef Hoffmann, a locksmith, was among them. Later, that the other four were Heinrich Tides, laborer (shot because he was a juror), Anton Schulz, farmer, Heinrich Schulz, farmer, and Stefan Bischof, farmer.

When the dead were loaded and we stopped singing, the two forced us to clap our hands behind the wagon; a Serb came, punched the young Serb in the face and pushed him away, towards the exit, without saying a word. Another, in brown uniform, told us to stop. Seven women had to climb on the wagon, the others had to clean up the bloodstains in the yard. I was on the wagon. Two Serbs and a Gypsy were walking next to the wagon, there were only the dead and us women on the wagon. We drove to the Schinderplatz, where the carcasses of the horses used to be buried, unloaded the dead and drove back, with the companions again walking beside the wagon, to the community center. Outside we had seen that probably three burials must have already taken place, which was clearly evident from the soil. When we unloaded the dead, there was a whole pack of gypsies outside with shovels, one of whom immediately wanted to undress a dead man. When an escort prevented him from doing so, he asked to be allowed to take pants only for himself, which he refused. - That the dead were buried naked, however, no one will doubt, since our companions left with us again."

Master locksmith Mathias Wehner from Heufeld, Modosch district in Banat:

(Minutes taken from the original with all errors.) "In the night of October 20, 1944, I [sic] was arrested by the partisans with 29 other men, we were told that we were going to work and that we should take food with us for two days; 7 women and girls were also among us. Overnight we were imprisoned in the Gemeintehaus, in the morning we were taken with about 30 men from the sister community Mastort via St. Hubert, -231-

Where about 30 men from St. Hubert came to us, they were taken to Kikin-da in wagons (among the St. Hubert men there were already men who had been beaten black and blue).

In Kikinda the partisans did not seem to be able to get rid of us, they drove us from one place to another (there

was still no camp and the executioners were certainly not there), until we arrived at the Kuria in the evening; there they took everything from us and we were locked up, 20 - 30 men in a cell.

Then it started: We got our first blows when you asked us if we were in the SS "Prinz Eugen". I also reported and got my first blows. There I saw that one must not report to anything; those who did not report did not receive any blows. - Next to us in one of the cells we were incarcerated by well-known rich Serbs from Kikinda, who were also beaten and had to crow like roosters. - One day they came into our cell and picked out 15 men (who were not SS or police) and took them away, who went to prepare the future concentration camp ...

After three days of torture (we were not even allowed to go out to the glo) we all had to go down to the courtyard in the evening; we thought that now we were going to be shot, there were also the manilla ropes (hemp ropes) for us in the back, but we were not shot, but led under heavily armed escort to the milk hall (christened the blood hall by us), where we were the first to open the Kikinda concentration camp. (There we met again our 15 comrades.) So we lay for the first time on 23. 10. 44 in the concentration camp Velika Kikinda on little straw on the asphalt; and we saw by the straw that many had already lain on the straw before us. The large, newmilkhall building had a cellar underneath, and we were amazed the next day when the afternoon of October 24, 1944 220 Reich German soldiers were led up from the cellar, written down with the help of an interpreter (by us), and taken away; some Italian prisoners were left behind in the milk hall. What happened to the prisoners we do not know. Are they still alive?

Now the great misery began for us. On 25. 10. 44 the first beasts in human form arrived (4-5 men Licsans). They picked out (wallos) about 20 of our men, took them one by one into the middle of the hall and hit and stabbed them with rifle butts, even with rifle barrels they stabbed the men in the body. - The fact that no one remained lying dead still wows me today, and if most of them had not been shot later, some of them would certainly have been killed. - Only a few got away without being hit this time, among the few was me, but even watching that was terrible. And so the torture continued every day.

The next day local partisans came, they also knew some of us and chose their victims among us. There were meanwhile

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Men from Selesch and Kikinda also came to us; there was Mr. Weber from Selesch, the father of Anton Weber (the police leader in Kikinda during the Hitler era). Mr. Weber was beaten so badly (with bullock tenners) that the skin on his back was completely blue; it was terrible to watch (I was three meters away), and almost unbelievable that the skin of a man could withstand 50 blows with bullock tenners without cracking (Weber received 25 blows twice). Then the second (known to me) was Pitinger Franz from Mastort. He had been a policeman (guard) in the Hitler era in the Csoga internment camp, and had been recognized in Kikinda. He was beaten and kicked until he lay dead, then they threw him a turnip and said: "Eat this! We watched all this; even some unknown people were beaten, it was terrible. - Pitinger recovered so that he could leave by ambulance. - In a few days about 500 men were taken to the concentration camp. They picked out the old, the sick and those who were still in the camp. They were told that they would be taken to a light camp, so about 80 men left. Many acquaintances were among them, including my brother, Mr. Weber and Pitinger, as well as my 81-year-old retired elementary school teacher Mathias Mayer (from Heufeld), who lived in Kikinda. You were never seen again, but we heard immediately that you had been shot.

The most furious brawl was now over, we went out to work on the railroad line every day. We had no kitchen for the first 14 days, but received a piece of bread and sausage once every day; after 14 days we received a ler soup and bread in the evening.

On the night of November 1, another large transport of about 100 people, men and women, arrived at the concentration camp from Heufeld, Mastort and St. Hubert, including my 18-year-old youngest daughter Lene Wehner. The milk hall was surrounded by a high wire fence and barbed wire. No one was allowed out at night. One can imagine, over 500 people in one building, no toilet and inside all of them doing their work in buckets; it was terrible. - The women were housed in an outbuilding and were treated more humanely.

In the night of November 2, a guard shot through the window from outside; he said that someone wanted to pass through. On November 3, 20 men were picked out and shot in public outside the milk hall; we were inside and heard the shots outside, it was true between day and night. After the shooting some partisans came in, looked over and over in the rows; I immediately thought that they were looking for some to take away the dead. And so

it was. They picked out 4 young boys opposite me, then came to me and took me, too, and led us out.

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And there lay the 20 men in two rows, naked, shot in the neck; a farmer's wagon stood here, where we lute the dead up. Among the dead was a well-known mastorter (named Deni), who weighed about 250 pounds, but we didn't force him; so I said to the boys, ask for another strong man (I didn't know Serbian); now they brought Peter Heidenfelder from Selesch as the sixth man. Now we lured 10 men and drove them out to an empty lot next to the Roman Catholic cemetery. Cemetery, threw the dead into a room-sized mass grave and drove back. We walked two and two (eingehengt) behind the wagon, next to us and behind us partisans with MP. I had my nephew Hans Schneider from Mastrot (student) hanging in my arms. When we arrived at the milk hall, the sole of my nephew's shoe came off (it was raining terribly, and they had taken away our good footwear and given us bad footwear), Hans Schneider stopped to fix his shoe; I didn't want to let him, but he broke away from my arm and stopped. - I knew that one could not make a misstep here. - In any case, I had little hope that we would come out of the funeral with our lives. - So, H. Schneider stopped, the partisan made noise and drove H. Schneider forward. When we arrived at the spot, the guard asked the guard who had been behind what was going on. The guard said that H. Schneider wanted to go through. H. Schneider (my nephew) immediately had to lie down on his stomach (one step away from me) and received two shots in the neck from the post leader with a carbine. Now we loaded the dead, H. Schneider as the eleventh, and drove them out. On the way, Heidenfelder asked me (quietly) whether I thought we would get out of there with our lives; I said: If not a wunter happened, no. I thought that after the funeral we would be shot into the hole. When it was so far, I looked:

well? They did not shoot, but said, all down into the hole (true a 2 meter deep hole). When we were down, I looked up: well, still not shooting? They said, put the dead all in one corner; then they said, get them all out again. I was now ready, the cameramen had to pull me up by the heels. I said to Heidenfelder on the way home: "You see, miracles still happen! - Now it remained for me to tell my brother-in-law Anton Frauenhoffer where his grandson H. Schneider remained (Anton Frauenhoffer had also been with me in the concentration camp since November 1, 1944).

The next day, 4. 11. 44, we went to work on the railroad line, covered in blood as we were. When we came home in the evening, arrived in the blood hall, we had to line up; and you asked: Who had given the signal at the "Prinz-Eugen" to leave! I did not resign, my com erat Peter Wehner next to me resigned, about 100 men resigned. They counted off 50 men from the end, the rest could resign, my camerat too. The 50 men from the "Prinz-Eugen" were shot in the evening.

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Windows closed, 12 hayfields of cameramen were there. In order not to have to help bury the dead, I hid in the cellar with the cameramen. Then another partisan came into the cellar and was looking for something; I was sitting next to a Heufeld cameraman, Peter Stüber, who spoke good Serbian, thought he could do it by saying to the partisan: "Here are all the old people! Well, come on! said the partisan, and Stüber was immediately shot. - The 50 dead were taken away and buried by Hungarians who were also with us in the concentration camp; they also said that the hole where we threw the 21 men the night before was filled up that very night and that they dug a fresh hole for 50 men.

The next day, Sunday, 5. 11. 44, we had to sit in the courtyard on the asphalt from early morning until evening; towards evening the gang of murderers arrived and shouted: Wehr bei der Polizei wahr, austreten! Many of them left and joined the ranks of the dead. Next to me sat a young man from St. Hubert, he stood up. I asked him: What are you doing? He said: I was a police officer. I said: Sit down, no one will call you. He sat down again, in a while he stood up and joined the line of the shooting ducks. Many of them were chosen, but none of them was near me (and the young man would have been alive today, if he had had good nerves and had not stood up). That evening 110 men were shot, they were bundled together and had to march out to the grave themselves.

We went to work every day. On 6. 11.44 we were assigned 20 men to clean the train of Russians passing through the station. A young man from St. Hubert was also with us 20 men, I heard from his speech that he was tired of life, I wanted to tell him. He said we would all be shot. He threw himself under an approaching train, 4 empty wagons passed over him. The guard attached to us ran to him and shot him in the head. We were always made aware of the fact that if one of us passed through, the others would all be shot They wanted to lead us all into the

camp, but the Russian sub-officer, to whom we were subordinate, would not allow it, otherwise we would have had 19 men shot. - The dead man was put in a box next to the railroad tracks.

The next Friday, 10. 11. 44, another 100 men were selected and shot. - On 11. 11. 44 another 160 men were picked out, among them was also me.

This is how it happened: we were lined up in two rows of four, in the middle of the two rows the murderers ran back and forth and picked out their victims (indiscriminately), with preference for the better dressed ones. Those who picked them out were led by partisans to the end of the wide row, where those condemned to death were placed; on the way in -235-

The row of dead were all beaten to death at once. This went on for quite a while, then I was also called out; I said good night to my brother-in-law (Anton Frauenhoffer) standing next to me and left, immediately receiving two blows over the head with oxen tenners, but I had a good fur cap on. I marched towards the row of dead, when I arrived at the end of the row of four, I looked around, well everyone had been hit so far up to the row of dead and I only got two over the head, then I saw that there was no partisan behind me. Shortly decided I jumped at the end wieter into the row of four. I thought: This way I am dead, and when they see me, I am also just dead. I pulled my cap deep into my head, turned down my skirt collar and was not recognized, although they called out one next to me. After they had 160 men, we were allowed to enter the Blood Hall again. - My brother-in-law had already told the cameramen that I was no more (also my daughter); when I later stepped among the cameramen (because I had been hiding for a while), they said: Where did you come from - what was true - how true? When I told you how it was true, a Kamerath said: God has given Matz the good thought. - No, said Michael Wehner (Heufeld), Matz had the right thought at the right moment. During supper, my daughter said through the kitchen window: "Father, are you still there?"

Antern Tags, am 12. 11.44, Sontags, sasen wier wieter den ganzen Tag im kalten Hof. In the evening, the mortars came racing in (with motorized rath). We thought now it was going to start again, and I rejoiced when they drove us into Bluthalle. They had brought 112 men from Bashahit, and they were shot that evening. Among them were two men known to me, Mathias Beierle (born in Heufeld) and Jakob Konrad from Topola. They were shot outside next to the milk hall and buried on the milk hall grounds. The men were shot first, we heard the screams of the men, then a shot was fired at small intervals, I counted up to 72 shots, then I fell asleep. - The next day in the morning a boy (2 years old) came among us and said fearfully: "May I talk to you? Oh yes, I said, where did you come from? He said, I was left alone from the Bashahites last night.

Those who were sick or unable to work were shot at home during the day, when the others were at work; on November 7, 1944, a transport was shot in the afternoon, among them 4 Heufelders:

Johann Wehner, Nik. Blocher, Josef Hari and Franz Leutner. They were shot and buried on the Bluthallen grounds (my daughter, who was not at work that day, watched the shooting through the window).

These were the major executions in the Kikinda concentration camp, but there were also some outside... Here in the camp only the cranes were killed -236-

and shot them. And one evening from a mixed-speaking village (Sanad) 28 women were shot, we saw the women and heard the shots.

At Christmas 1944 we were not at work, but there they searched out the men from 18-45 years and the women from 18-30 years, among them was also my daughter Lene Wehner. - Those who came from the concentration camps in Yugoslavia were used for heavy duty in Russia, my daughter spent 5 years in Russia in a coal mine 800 m below ground.

Life continued like this in the Kikinda concentration camp. I came to the railroad workshop as a locksmith, was picked up every evening and taken there in the morning, which saved me from the strains of winter. Dysentery also came to the camp, many died of it, the whole night we stood in line for the great need, that is unimaginable how true it was; only in spring did a latrine come in the yard, where one could then go." Teacher Mrs. A. E. from Mastort:

"On All Souls' Day 1944, no one was allowed to leave his home. Strange partisans were passing through the village. When they entered our house, their greeting was: "Bas smo ubili vasu komsinicu!" (We have just murdered your neighbor!).

It was Mrs. Schwarz who was shot from behind in her mother's house because she had incurred the wrath of a worker. - I had to go with her to the parish hall for interrogation! My bag was already packed since many men,

among them teacher Schneider and two girls, were taken at night and brought to the camp in Kikinda. - Apart from me, the most respected girls, many men, one of the richest peasant women, her 14-year-old son and our doctor, Dr. Gerhardt, were driven to the community center. (Dr. Gerhardt was allowed to go home again. He was the only doctor in the area. Some Dobrovoljci interceded on his behalf). Miss Jasper, the kindergarten teacher, was shot in the street. Some partisans attacked the boy's sister. From the community center in Mastort they drove us, about 20 to 25 people, including two 14-year-olds (two shy, quiet boys who played no role at all in the youth), to the community center in Heufeld. On the way we had to run, shouting "Ziveo Tito!" and "Ziveo Stalin!". In the courtyard of the municipal office in Heufeld we were forced to sit down on the ground, even though it was raining. A wall projection blocked my view of the entrance to the courtyard; suddenly we heard muffled thuds and a voice speaking High German: "What have I done?" On it a partisan: "Pucaj, ubij ga!" (Fire! Kill him!) A few shots, a heavy fall, a few sighs. - Then the bells struck, it rang at noon. - Four -237- strong men had to step forward and take away the shot man. It was our pastor Adam Steigerwald (over 70 years old).

In the afternoon, together with the hayfields, we were taken to the railroad station in St. Hubert. On the way, some partisans held out the prospect of the greatest humiliations to us with gloating words. In the evening we arrived in Kikinda. The large cheese factory and dairy, near the train station, was set up as a camp. The whole building was overcrowded with our people. The men were crammed into the factory rooms, the girls and women into the living quarters. In this camp I spent the most horrible time of my life."

The prisoner massacre in 1945

Towards the end of the war, the Tito partisans began to slaughter everywhere the German prisoners of war, but also the anti-communist Croats, Serbs and Slovenes who had fallen into their hands or whom the British Marshal Lord Alexander had handed over to the Tito partisans on the orders of the Churchill government.

200 000 men of the German Wehrmacht, police, Waffen-SS, labor service fell into partisan captivity. More than 80 000 perished. These figures are probably very cautious and overly optimistic.

When the desperate German garrison of Belgrade, which was encircled, broke out on October 18, 1944, about 30,000 men, some of them wounded, fell into captivity here alone. Their fate is reported, among other things, in Volume I/I "The German Prisoners of War in Yugoslavia 1945 to 1949":

"During the first days of my captivity, we so-called Reich Germans were outlawed (October 16 to October 20, 1944)," reported one of the informants. "Countless prisoners of war and also Volksdeutsche were shot in Belgrade during those days. I saw several rows of mass graves from the window in the courtyard of the Tobcider barracks, where our camp was. When shootings took place, we were not allowed to show our faces at the windows." Another has heard that the German mountain troops were driven into the tank trenches in the suburb of Topcider, shot and buried there. Several others have heard from Yugoslav civilians that some 25,000 to 30,000 men were shot in 1944. "According to comrades, 5,000 comrades were shot on a forecourt of Camp 3 Belgrade at the beginning." About this process, another says that the prisoners of war were fusilized 100 men at a time "until the Russian intervened." The height where this happened was called the "mountain of suffering" by the prisoners of war. The testifier was not there himself. The largest part seems to have been in Banjica prison and on Avala Hill, 238

but also to have perished on "a nearby island" (presumably meaning the so-called Gypsy Island, where later a prisoner-of-war camp was also stationed)." ...

... A special reference is given by the returnee who reports that during the capture of Belgrade "several hundred German soldiers were shot and buried" "there, where in 1956 the local committee was built. The skeletons found during the earthworks confirm the fact." He got the information from an acquaintance who came to the Federal Republic from Yugoslavia only after 1956. He further says, "in the upper part of the street Juzni Boulevar in Belgrade also . . . about 100 soldiers of the Wehrmacht were shot in the street during their capture." "As I was told by a Yugoslav eyewitness before my release, when Belgrade was captured by the Russians and partisans, hundreds of German intelligence aides and soldiers were impaled on pointed stakes, and hundreds were also set up as targets and shot." Another returnee knows from descriptions of comrades who were themselves present at the incident in question that the Wehrmacht helpers and Red Cross nurses were placed partly naked in shop windows, later taken out on a boat to the Danube and thrown into the water there. It is often emphasized that Soviet officers finally put a stop to the shootings. Some 10,000 murdered German soldiers are said to have been buried in the ramparts of the castle-like Kalemegdan fortifications, again according to Belgrade civilians. The

POWs were often shot by machine-gun salvos "quite methodically." A Red Cross nurse told another informant that during the capture of Belgrade, a fully occupied hospital train was "completely cut down with knives" at the main train station. Another detail deals with the death of about 150 to 180 German soldiers, who are said to have been buried by the partisans after being shot "by blowing up a mud wall...". The mass grave is located at the brickyard between the observatory on the cemetery, about 3 km from the observatory."

Those who escaped the shootings were transported to the Soviet Union almost in their entirety, which does not mean, however, that they actually reached their destinations. For example, on a march to Calafat in Romania, which, along with Focsani, was set up as a transit station for the transports to the East, about 3000 of 6000 prisoners of war were left behind on the way. They were not up to the strain, as many of them had to march barefoot, dressed only in shirts and underpants. Debilitation, wounds, dysentery, and shootings of those unable to march by the be guard teams (up to the Bulgarian or Romanian border Partisa- -239-

nen, then Red Army soldiers) claimed further victims. From Calafat they mostly went to Vidin in Bulgaria and from there (partly) by ship to Reni in Bessarabia. The prisoners of war from the Belgrade fighting area who were gathered in Velika Plana also later went to the Soviet Union. About 350 of them, who were sick or seriously wounded, stayed behind. The marches often amounted to up to 800 km. Of an original 5000-man marching group, only half arrived in Vidin, Bulgaria. Another reported that 700 men were left at the Sofia (Bulgaria) camp. The march rations did not reach subsistence levels and therefore accelerated the physical collapse of many POWs. "Those who remained behind were shot by the escort crew."

The most affected were the members of the Waffen SS division "Prinz Eugen", the division "Handschar", the police, the field gendarmerie and a part of the German officers. In Reichenburg (Brestanica) "in June 1945 we had to dig up 300 German soldiers who had been shot in the stream in the forest - probably by partisans - and transfer them to a collection camp. Some of them still had identification tags on. A determination of the personal data was prevented by the guards." Another informant says: "On the right bank of the river Save near Reichenburg there is a mass grave with 450 shot German soldiers, always 6 men strong, tied together with telephone wire on their arms. All had been shot by shot in the neck, on Pentecost Sunday 1945." Similar observations were made in Rann (Brezice). There "I saw in the park ... Bodies in German uniform without rank insignia, without papers buried in splinter trenches. Had been shot in groups of 2-5, hands tied with wire, in the morning hours at the splinter ditch. In my opinion prisoners of Ortskommando Rann and shot on his orders. In total there were 15 to 20 corpses, shot (neck shots MP) on 5 to 6 different days in the summer of 1945. Corpses were supposed to have been reburied later because the smell of decomposition permeated the park through the fascines of the splinter trenches. Before my activity, the trench was already partially buried and probably filled with corpses." A second returnee from Rann states that 5 to 10 men were shot daily during the period from 20, 5, 1945 to 19, 6, 1945. It is further stated that near Rann in 1945 about 1800 Volksdeutsche soldiers of the division "Prinz Eugen" from the communities of Lazarfeld, Ennsthausen, Setschan, Molidorf and others had been shot. Only motorists and some young prisoners of war had been pulled out. One of the eyewitnesses reported: "Perhaps it is... already known... that a group of about 1600 men on 18. 5. 1945, members of the Waffen-SS, 7th SS-Division "Prinz Eugen", -240-

were shot by partisans of the I. Army, II. partisan brigade, in the place Sveti Georg (Sv. Jurij), that is between Cilli and Agram. I was also in this group and was also taken away to be shot, but we few men managed to get through and so happily ended up as prisoners of war, in camp Kragujevac." The shooting of members of the SS division "Prinz Eugen" and other units is also reported from Krusevac. About 2000 men are said to have been fusilized there already after the capture of the town, of whom about 400 to 500 were Germans. The dead were buried west of the town on the hill Bagdala. Between Unter-Kötsch (Sp. Hoce) and Marburg (Maribor) there is a 6 km long tank trench "where shootings took place for several nights. SS members, Wehrmacht members and civilians. According to partisans, there were about 20,000." On Tito's birthday, in Neu Cilli (Novo Celje), "about 20 to 25 wounded SS men were taken out of their beds and killed in the nearest wooded area without any judgment. The salvos were heard in the hospital, and the two trucks returned empty to the hospital in about half an hour." A man from Untersteiermark "who had witnessed everything" told a POW in 1947 that in Marburg many soldiers had been "annihilated by machine gun fire at the tank trenches, non-stop.... The trenches are all full of dead, it is estimated at 20,000 to 30,000." Also referring to the events in Marburg, a returnee said, "I can

also report that thousands were concreted into rock bunkers by SS and police and blown up or shot into tank trenches, which we then had to fill in. All according to reports from comrades and experienced ourselves." Also in Reichenegg (Rifnik), "partisans had driven our prisoners into a bunker and then blown up the bunker. A very strong smell of decay came from the blown bunker. We therefore had to go there from the camp... and dig soil from the mountain so that we could better cover the bunker with soil." According to a returnee, the following occurred at Podsused on May 22, 1945:

"At about 10 o'clock in the evening, at intervals of 10 minutes each time, 15 Germans, 90 men in all, were taken out of the camp hall, with the explanation that there was food and they would then be transported to the Samobor camp.... The soldiers who were taken out were led across the bridge over the river Save and lined up on the left side of the river; they had to undress and take off their luggage. A partisan stepped behind each soldier and shot the German in the neck. The corpses were then thrown into the Save, which is relatively deep and torrential at this point (The Save is not regulated and forms many sand islands at this place.) Of the total 90 men, 8 could save themselves by jumping into the water beforehand. Some were still injured by shots of the partisans. I personally met these people later after my over- -241-

We were talking about the transfer to the Precko camp, about 3 km west of Zagreb.... While the people were being challenged from the warehouse, we became aware of what was going on, because one of the people who had been shot came back into the warehouse, described the incident to us, and we then observed the further events from the roof of the warehouse. The staff physician Dr. M. from Düsseldorf, who was present with us, asked us to protest in chorus, otherwise to try to break out collectively, about 330 men. Thereupon the partisans stopped the shootings. The next morning we were then taken to the Precko camp, where the aforementioned 8 rescued men arrived with bullet wounds and without clothes."

90 men of a medical assembly center were chased by the partisan bridge guard near Susedgrad (8 km westward from Zagreb) "stripped and robbed into the Save on 22. 5. 1945. Three men - including myself - escaped alive." In the collective camp Laufen (Ljubno), at the foot of the Karawanken, "all officers and officials were gathered, subjected to strict interrogation, and after a few days shot at night. Witness to this was a young lieutenant who had escaped and later rejoined us. The name is not known to me." In the port of Fiume (Rijeke), "400 men were detached and positioned so that they fell into the Adriatic Sea shot down immediately." On April 4, 1945, "about 45 soldiers - sick and wounded - were shot on the island of Pag and very likely buried in a mass grave in the cemetery of the town of Pag." Near Ilirska Bistrica, the former Villa del Nevoso, "on 7. 5. 1945, after capture, 17 to 20 officers of the 237th I. D. were shot by partisans." Another reported, "After the capture I was brought before a partisan leader in Susak for interrogation. On the way there I had to wait for a long time on the road. During this time a flat wagon loaded with dead comrades was driven past from the yard. On this wagon I recognized the shot soldiers of my platoon lying above. Their hands were tied behind their backs with wire. I was convinced that these were all the comrades of my platoon and also those from the stomach sick battalion." On April 21, 1945, at 8:00 in the morning, "the members of the 3rd Battery were shot in St. Anna/Croatia." On 4/22/1945, 9 km southeast of Raamander, 1400 men are said to have been shot and buried there. Among the dead is a large part of the former SS division "Handschar". According to a returnee, there are 6 mass graves in the camp area 101 Agram (Zagreb) created by shootings after the war. Residents of this area estimate the number of those shot at 800 men. Three of these mass graves are located "10 m to the left of Kerestinec Castle, two mass graves 350 m from the castle on the road to the airfield (on the right), one mass grave 120 m behind the serum factory Kalinovatsch".

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In Smederevo in 1945 "20 comrades were shot by the partisan command. Were picked up on the pretext of being put to work and shot in a bloodlust. Must still note that they were comrades who were more or less sick and wounded." Repeatedly reported from Dubrovnik (Ragusa), some 200 men were "picked out indiscriminately and taken away" there. "These young sturdy men up to 35 years of age were dressed only in trousers.... And were not allowed to carry luggage. According to a partisan field sergeant, they were shot." According to civilians, "on the island of Krk there was a naval base of 420 men, who surrendered one morning at 10 o'clock and were completely shot the same day in the evening." According to a report of the guards, about 2500 men were shot in the air-raid trenches on the airfield of Zirklach (Cerklje). In a ravine near Windisch Feistritz (Slovenska Bistrica)

there were said to be 10,000 dead. The ravine was later blown up. Another 250 soldiers are believed to have been liquidated in a ravine near Eisenkappel on the Styrian border. According to information from the Italian population on the island of Cherso (Cres), the survivors of the Naval Intelligence Officer Trieste of the Cherso field office "were killed" after their capture.

"I was a former member of Field Post No. M 53 183 (11th Sich. Div. of the Navy) with headquarters in Trieste, Div. Staff. About the fate of the crew of the fortress Pola I can give information only in so far as at the beginning of the Yugoslavian captivity an escaped eyewitness told me the following about the terrible bloody deed in Pola. This eyewitness is no longer known to me by name and therefore his address is also unknown.

After the abandonment of the fortress of Pola, all the soldiers and members of the naval units were packed together in a collective camp. The officers were separated from the men and sent to another camp. During the night, for about 2 or 3 days, work groups of about 100 men were taken out of the camp by truck, with the idea that they could be better employed elsewhere. In reality, they were only driven to a deep ravine near Pola, where they were shot in the back (facing the ravine). This was repeated up to 20 times, i.e. until about 2000 men had to give up their lives. The officers were probably shot first and foremost. A record of the personal details of those shot by one of our prisoners was quite out of the question ... "

In 1957, the Italian authorities made attempts to open various walled caves in the Karst mountains of the Istrian peninsula, which had been held by the Titopartisans for forty days in 1945.

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The Catholic weekly newspaper "Der Volksbote", published in Innsbruck, wrote about it at that time: "As is well known, the port city of Trieste, which was still held by German troops, was occupied almost simultaneously by Tito's partisan units and a New Zealand-Allied division in the last days of April 1945. However, the commander of the New Zealand division, General Fryberg, did not take the supreme command over the city, but the military and civil administration were left to the Yugoslav partisans. Only after 40 days Tito's units had to retreat again from Trieste to a demarcation line that had been established in the meantime.

During the 40 days, however, the Tito partisans practiced an unimaginably cruel and bloody regiment of revenge and retribution. Within a few weeks more than 7000 Italians and Germans disappeared, whose fate is still unknown. The majority of these victims of the Tito partisans' blind revenge justice, including, according to previous surveys, over 1100 German prisoners of war, were bestially murdered and thrown into the Karst caves only a few kilometers from Trieste.

While in the meantime, on the private initiative of the relatives, the bodies of the murdered had already been extracted from numerous smaller caves, identified and buried, the two largest mass graves, namely the "Foiba 149" near Opicina and the "Miniera" near Basovizza, remained strangely untouched. In the former there are estimated to be the bodies of 1300 murdered, including 350 German soldiers, the entire staff of the German field hospital of Trieste "taken over" by the Titopartisans. In the "Foiba Miniera", on the other hand, the remains of about 3,600 Italians and 800 German soldiers are believed to be buried.

From those days until 1954, the Anglo-American military government of the "Free State of Trieste" was repeatedly urged by the Italian side to open these caves. The Anglo-American government, however, resisted this demand on the grounds that it would be best to let the grass of oblivion grow over these gruesome events of the first post-war weeks, so as not to cause the tense political atmosphere on the upper Adriatic to explode. The Anglo-American Trieste government ordered that for years the corpses of the murdered Italians and German soldiers be poured over the garbage dump of the city of Trieste."

The secret of these mass graves has been preserved to this day. -244-

The Inferno in Czechoslovakia **The mass crimes happened in public**

The most miserable crimes committed against Germans in 1945 happened in Czechoslovakia. What went on here is beyond all measure. More than 3,200,000 Sudeten Germans were robbed of all their possessions, some 250,000 were tortured and murdered in unimaginable tortures, and of the survivors, 2,814,000 were driven out of their homeland. On top of that, about 500 000 German soldiers who surrendered, Silesians on the run, East Prussians and Pomeranians who tragically escaped to Czech territory were killed. The mass of them is still considered missing today.

By no means were the horrible events in the Czechs! a spontaneous outburst of the people's soul. The only

explanation for the horrible events is the fact that the Czechs were the most loyal collaborator people of Hitler's Germany, to such an extent that even in the British House of Commons it had to be bitterly stated: "The Czechs gave themselves up and did not even make a gesture against the occupation."

The Czech civil servants had remained at their posts without exception. The Germans did not even find it necessary to carry out a fundamental purge of the civil service.

For the war, the entire Czech economy worked smoothly. The Czech production potential was significantly higher in early 1945 than in 1939 due to continuous investments.

Czech agriculture increased its output in the Protectorate to such an extent that imports could be dispensed with. Their only difficulty was the unheard-of exodus of Czech agricultural workers, who, without being asked or even forced to do so, flocked to the armament factories working for the Germans in Austria and Germany in such droves that the official cultivation plan was at times in danger.

The Czechs never, in any place and at any time, actively resisted the German occupation in the way the Russians, French, Belgians or Serbs did.

On March 15, 1939, General Sirovy, legendary figure from the glorious days of the Czech Legion in Serbia, greeted with a devoted smile and handshake the Germans who had just set foot on Prague soil.

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On May 5, 1945, when the German defeat was no longer a secret even for schoolchildren, when the American tanks were already in Pilsen and the Bolshevik divisions were outside Bodenbach, on that day and not an hour earlier, that Czech uprising broke out in Prague, which, with barricades in some streets, assaults on German passers-by and fights over individual blocks of houses, was the only attempt by the Czech people to confront the German occupation with weapons in hand. In the six years that lay between this attempt and the submissive bows of the one-eyed general at Prague Castle, literally nothing worthy of the name of active national resistance happened in the Bohemian-Moravian area. While the war swept over almost all the countries of Europe, and while in Poland as in France, in Russia as in Yugoslavia, in Greece as in Belgium, the country's resistance forces organized themselves into partisan associations and sabotage groups, Bohemia and Moravia remained an island of calm and internal peace. Not a single road attack on German columns took place, not a single railroad was blown up, not a single railroad track was torn up, not a single bridge was destroyed.

The only attempt to form a secret resistance organization made by officers and non-commissioned officers of the Czechoslovak army immediately after the establishment of the Protectorate was betrayed by Czechs to the German state police. The whole organization was captured, destroyed before it could become effective in any way.

The high Czech ministerial bureaucracy, which was taken over by the Germans almost unchanged, worked without any signs of passive resistance and without exposing themselves for anything other than their own position. The administration of the Protectorate, primarily after the administrative reform carried out by Reinhard Heydrich, rested almost exclusively on Czech shoulders. It functioned impeccably until immediately before the end of the war. Its smoothly orders and directives coming from the Reich authorities. It did not make any significant gesture to indicate that it was not a reliable instrument in the hands of the German political leadership.

The same good report in conduct can be given without scruple to the disciplined corps of the Czech gendarmerie and the Czech police. It was not a curiosity, but highly indicative of the Czech attitude to the given circumstances, that it was the Czech police chief of Prague, of all people, who repeatedly and anxiously warned, in vain, of the danger of the street corner where the assassination attempt on Heydrich finally took place.

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The Czech labor force as a whole was as reliable to the German leadership as the civil service and the police executive, and the Czech captains of industry and the financial powers were in detail. According to statistics of the Prague Central Federation of Industry, in 1944 the efficiency of Czech workers in the armament sector, especially in the metalworking industry, was on average 15 to 18 percent higher than the Reich average - a fact that cannot be explained by any coercion or force in the world. The annual average number of sabotage cases in the Protectorate remained below that of sabotage acts carried out in the Reich. The miners of Ostrava and Karwin went to their mines when in April 1945 the Russian was only 10 km away from Ostrava.

But it was not only in the years from 1939 to 1945 that the share of Czech industry in the total armament production of the Reich grew up to 33 percent; the Skoda Works in Pilsen, the Armament Works in Brunn and

the Vítkovice Ironworks produced machine tools, machine guns and material to an increasing extent from year to year, which simply became indispensable for the warfare of the Third Reich, because the Allied air war caused more and more armament plants in the Reich to fail or their capacity was limited.

Finally, the most secret manufacturing programs were entrusted to Czech factories with Czech engineers and Czech workers. And Czech workers worked with the same precision, reliability and diligence as their German colleagues in the Reich on the production of jet fighters and rocket planes, on the production of fuel for the V-weapons themselves.

Czech agriculture was not inferior to Czech labor in its contributions to the German war effort. Suffice it to point out one example among many: While in the German-speaking areas of the Protectorate the milk yield per cow amounted to 4.5 liters, in the purely Czech areas it was over 8 liters.

With the help of the British Secret Service alone, the Czech Beneš emigrants were able to parachute a few dozen saboteurs and assassins into Czechoslovakia from England on British planes during the war. Their exclusive mission was to destroy the good cooperation between the Czechs and Germans. This is how the assassination of the then Reich Protector Reinhard Heydrich was planned and eventually carried out. The British publicist Alan Burgess openly confesses in his work "Seven Men at Daybreak" the real background that led to the assassination of Heydrich:

"Heydrich was the architect to whom the Nazis owed the edifice of their success in Czechoslovakia. Once he was out of the way, the

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building would collapse. Everything would change. The Reich would receive such a slap in the face that continuation of collaboration would become impossible and any reconciliation extremely difficult."

The two Heydrich murderers, Jan Kubic and Josef Gabčík, were carefully trained for their assassination attempt in England, provided with weapons and dropped over the Czech Republic by an English plane with English parachutes.

After Heydrich's assassination, the Reich government reacted exactly as had been hoped in London at the Beneš emigration and Secret Service headquarters. In a crackdown, Lidice, a village near Kladno where various Secret Service agents received support, was destroyed, shooting the male 184 inhabitants, according to Czech accounts. 135 women were sent to concentration camps and children were handed over to state institutions.

But the mass of Czechs did not react even now. It remained completely quiet in the whole of the Czech Republic. Only when the American and Soviet armies entered Czech soil and the war was irretrievably lost for Germany, did the Czechs rise up and, with the bad conscience of a collaborator people, tried in the most bestial way to make up for the resistance they had neglected since 1939.

The Czech exile policy had carefully prepared the deprivation and expulsion of the Germans for years. Exile president Dr. Beneš demanded the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans already in September 1941 in an article "New order in Europe". The exiled Czech Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk confirmed in a letter of June 5, 1942 to Max Weinrich, *Yiddish Scientific Institute*, New York, that the Sudeten Germans should be expelled from the CSR.

In September 1942, the British government informed the Czech government-in-exile in London that, in principle, it had no objection to the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans.

On December 5, 1942, in a lecture to the English University of Manchester, Dr. Beneš demanded, "Expulsion of the Sudeten Germans!"

On May 12, 1943, President Roosevelt in Washington gave Dr. Beneš -who lied to the American President, claiming to already have Stalin's approval- American approval of the planned expulsion of the Sudeten Germans.

On May 29, 1943, Hubert Ripka of the Czech government-in-exile in London demanded Soviet approval for the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from the Soviet Ambassador Bogomolov. After consultation in Moscow, Bogomolov declared his agreement on behalf of the Soviet government on June 6, 1943.

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Political conviction played as little a role in the massacre that the Czech mob inflicted on the Sudeten Germans in 1945 as it did in their later expulsion. There was no more help and protection for the defenseless Germans.

The following affidavits testify to the "other Lidice".

Marianne Klaus:

"On May 9, 1945, my husband Gotthard Klaus, 66 years old, had been beaten to death in the police headquarters in Prague. I saw him for the last time on May 10 at 4 a.m. His face had bumps the size of fists, his mouth and nose were a bloody mass, his hands were swollen thick. I also saw 2 SS men being beaten in the face with whips until they collapsed covered in blood, then they were kicked in the stomach so that the blood gushed out, and finally they were grabbed by the feet and dragged down a flight of stairs. I saw a 'Wehrmacht helper' being stoned until she collapsed. Then she was hung from a rolling beam of a store. I saw an SS man hung by one foot from a candelabra and burned from the head up. That was in Prague on May 9, 1945."

Hermine Pytlik:

"I was in the Olomouc-Hodolein camp from 4. 6. 45 to 10. 6. 46, and there I witnessed how the inmates of the Olomouc old people's home who had been brought to the camp at the beginning of July, about 15 persons, were shot in two groups with pistols by the National Guard at very close range. The shooting took place in the evening hours in front of the windows of my barracks. They were all old, sick people, between the ages of 65 and 80."

Hedwig Hlavica:

"I was imprisoned for 5 months in the Kaunitz College, 8 months in the Miatkau concentration camp and three months in Bohonitz. I witnessed countless severe maltreatments and was also beaten myself. Many children under the age of 14 were imprisoned and died, mostly as a result of malnutrition and maltreatment. In Kaunitz College, about 10 persons died daily, who were not registered at all in the beginning."

Alois Stenzel:

"I was sent to Olomouc on 3. 8. b.y. with about 30 other boys between the ages of 11 and 18 and held for 10 weeks in the notorious Hodolein camp. There we were severely beaten every day. We ka-

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We never got to sleep before half past midnight, because we were chased out of the barracks several times every evening. At four o'clock in the morning we had to wake up again. During the day we had to work hard. Either unloading work at the train station, road work or canal work, and so on. Our rations consisted of a quart of black unsweetened coffee with a slice of bread in the morning and a thin soup, coffee and a slice of bread in the evening. Some boys also died there."

Manha Wölfel:

"I spent 15 months in the Klaidovka internment camp, where many hundreds were housed. The camp was infested with lice and bugged. The rations consisted only of water and bread. Many women with small children were also interned there. All the infants up to four years old died of malnutrition. There must have been 100 children. My child also died there on 12. 4. 1946 at the age of 15 months. Three or four days earlier the child had been taken to the children's hospital, where even the Czechs were horrified by the child's condition. I was informed in the camp when the child died. But when I asked where he would be buried, I received a blow to the head from the guard, so that I collapsed unconscious. I still do not know where my child is buried. The other women felt the same way. I can swear to this statement."

Franz Stix:

"I was working in Prague with my wife during the May days and was taken by the Czechs to the Hagibor camp, where we were housed in former Jewish barracks. We were fetched from there daily, with the worst rations, by Czech entrepreneurs who picked us out like on a slave market and harnessed us for themselves for days without pay. My wife Hildegard was heavily pregnant during the May days. Nevertheless, she was treated just as ruthlessly as all the other women, whose hair was cut off and who were made to do hard labor tearing down the barracks. The hygienic and nutritional conditions in the camp were so bad that our child died of hunger after a few weeks. We don't even know where it is buried, because 4 to 5 infants every day, buried in mass graves."

Elfriede Hanke:

"On June 2, 1945 I was taken to the Troppau camp. At first I was beaten, choked and threatened with a pistol,

because I said that I was not a member of the Party and that I did not know anything about ammunition, which they did not want to believe. On 6. 7. 1945 I was taken to the -250- prison.

I was brought to the camp and severely maltreated. As soon as I was brought in, I was slapped, kicked and beaten with rubber truncheons. This was repeated daily for 13 days. On the 13th day Fitzek came with several other Czechs. They threw me onto the cot in my cell, pulled off my trousers and beat me with rubber truncheons from the waist to the calf of both legs, so that in the evening I had to be laid in the sickroom, where I had to lie on my face for four weeks, since I had large festering sores on my buttocks and on both legs. I also had to be cut several times. I was sick for four months. Then I was no longer beaten, but I was yelled at, pushed and bullied like everyone else. On February 8, I was released."

Elfriede Brookelt:

"After my father's death, I continued my mother's farming in Niemes with my son. On June 1, 1945, I was ordered by the Czechs of Denis to return to Denis to my home. I immediately complied with this request and was arrested together with my husband, without giving any reason, and sent to the prison in Grottau. In Grottau I was severely maltreated. We were beaten daily, early before work and in the evening after returning to the camp, with rubber truncheons and fists. My husband was separated from me and I never saw him again.

On June 13, 1945 we, about 30 people, were taken to the district court in Reichenberg. When the men were brought in, they had to strip naked in the corridor and were beaten with rubber truncheons and whips. The 5 women in the transport were taken to the women's section and severely maltreated. Each woman had to strip naked and was then beaten by 4 Czech soldiers with rubber truncheons and whips, bent over a bed. When my turn came last, I refused to undress because I was uncomfortable. A constable looked to see if this was true and explained that it was the same. Since I still refused to undress, one guard pulled up my shirt and another pulled down my pants, and four men beat me with rubber truncheons and whips across my back, buttocks, legs and feet. There must have been 25 to 30 blows. When I tried to go back, I collapsed. After a quarter of an hour we were taken to the reception office, where I was again threatened with the whip. When I returned to the cell, I was slapped by a sergeant and dragged into the cell by the hair because I "also had children." On October 10, 1946, I was suddenly released without any action on my part or any reason given." -251-

Richard Ratchet:

"I was in Prague on May 5 at the Central Federation of Industry, where I had business. I was arrested from the offices by Czech guardsmen and herded into the camp of the Leihamtsgasse School with many other Germans. There we were not given anything to eat for days and were constantly maltreated. We had to collect corpses and sweep streets. I had to strip to the waist, was given a sign with the inscription "Nemec" on it, and was driven to Wenceslas Square the streets

I myself was an eyewitness to German soldiers being hung upside down on gas candelabra in Wenceslas Square and fires being lit underneath. The victims perished in terrible agony.

I myself was taken to the NKVD prison in mid-May, from which I escaped with the help of a Russian sergeant. On the escape I was again arrested and taken with many other Germans to the camp "Dvur Tejnice" near Bohemian Brod. There were about 3000 Germans there, men and women, whose hair was shorn and who had to sleep in a grain silo for months without washing facilities. There was nothing to eat but dried vegetable soup. Almost all the babies who were in the camp, as well as a large number of the older camp inmates, died in Dvur Tejnice.

When I asked the camp commander, the landowner and Czech lieutenant Karel Kadecabek, to take a woman who had developed severe bleeding during childbirth to a doctor, he replied, "Into the pond with her, what more do the Germans need children!"

Marie Seckl:

"I am 80 years old, my sister 74. Nevertheless, we were forced to go on the death march to Pohrlitz. On the way we were often beaten and pushed with rifle butts and clubs. We often fell down and had bloody knees. In Pohrlitz we lay on bare concrete for 17 days. Through five days we received no rations and then inedible soups. From

Pohrlitz we came with dysentery to a farmer's wife in Preskowitz, from where my sister was taken to the hospital in Brunn with a sick foot. At the end of July we returned to the completely robbed apartment and received from our savings banks only 500 crowns monthly together, with a bread price of 10 crowns a kilogram that we literally had to go begging. In the alley we were constantly grabbed and insulted."

Maria Benatzky:

"On July 30, 1945, at about 4:30 p.m., I heard a strong detonation in the Schön-Priesen direction. At the same time an airplane flew from the same direction

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against the city. At that time I was in a barbershop on the market square in Aussig, from where I could overlook most of the square. Shortly afterwards I saw Czech railwaymen in uniform and also Czech civilians chasing the Germans, who all had to wear white armbands. At 30 and 40 they always rushed at a victim, knocked him to the ground and kicked him until he remained lying. The head and the face were then only a bloody, misshapen mass. I myself saw at least 12 Germans in such a battered state. Among the victims were also women and girls. I myself heard the death cries of a girl and saw her trampled down. At the same time the workers from the strata works came across the new bridge and were hunted down in the same way. Between 30 and 50 German workers were thrown onto the bridge site and shot into the pit by Czech soldiers with machine guns if anyone still stirred. Many Germans were thrown into the Elbe in a severely injured condition and shot at when they emerged from the water. The people who escaped the bloodbath were herded indiscriminately into the Lerchenfeld camp. It is estimated that 600 Germans lost their lives in Aussig that day.

Many signs indicate that this bloodbath was prepared according to plan. Half an hour after the detonation, the Czech soldiers in the grain school took up their weapons and joined the street hunt without any special order. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon a good-natured Czech worker sent some German workers, to whom he was well-disposed, home early from the ammunition depot which later exploded, although they themselves had objected that it was not yet the end of work."

Ehrenhart Adam:

"On June 12, 1945, I was released from American captivity in Aalen near Stuttgart and went to Czechoslovakia with an American border crossing permit to look for my family. When I crossed the border, the Czech border authorities took all the food I had received from the American camp commandant for the trip, as well as my money, blankets and coat. In Warnsdorf, despite my release papers, I was arrested and sent to the prisoner-of-war camp. I was there from July 24, 1945 to May 28, 1946. When I was released, there were still about 2000 German prisoners of war there, even though they had been released earlier from American or Russian captivity. They lived in the worst conditions imaginable, undernourished, and were used for the roughest work without pay.

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Especially in my camp, we were all examined for the SS blood group mark by a doctor from Prague, who identified about 200 SS members. These were then taken to the brewery in Nachod and handed over to the civilian population for maltreatment. I myself witnessed how all 200 men were cruelly murdered by the civilian population. Czech women, among them a certain Mrs. Zinke from Nachod-Komenskeho 233, stood out in particular. Mrs. Zinke boasted that she would kill more if she could. The SS men were stabbed by the women with knives and daggers, beaten to death with clubs and rifle butts. Bodies that still showed life were doused with gasoline and burned. I myself helped to load the bodies onto cars and bury them in 3 mass graves in Nachod Castle.

The prisoners of war were beaten daily. Several suffered broken jaws and knife wounds. Some also had their eyes knocked out. On 8. 5. 1946, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, in the market place of Nachod, all Germans were severely maltreated by the civilian population under Allied flags. The Germans were chased one by one for about 500 meters by a squadron of Czech civilians, and in the process - men and women and children - were beaten with sticks by the Czech civilians. Many were tripped up; if they fell, they were trampled underfoot. They were called out by name for maltreatment. The Czech policemen looked on without intervening."

Alfred Gebauer:

"I was arrested as a German in Prague on 6. 5. 1945 and was housed in turn in the camps of the Ministry of Education, the Scharnhorst School, the Wehrmacht Prison, the Stadium and the Labor Institute until the end of September, from where I was sent to the Troppau Court Prison. From there I was released for resettlement on 12. 6. 1946. I am a severely war-disabled person and was slapped and robbed of all my belongings by Vlasov soldiers during my arrest.

I saw with my own eyes: In the Scharnhorst School, female SS members were forced to roll around in a pool of water without their clothes, which were torn off their bodies. Then they were maltreated with kicks and rifle butts until they were unconscious. At the stadium a hare hunt was organized on SS soldiers in front of 5000 prisoners with submachine guns. In the process, 20 SS soldiers were shot. Some of them had to jump into the latrine, where they were shot with machine guns. They remained in the latrine, and the prisoners had to continue using the latrine. Women were beaten with rubber truncheons while being taken away, so that they were covered with blood to- -254-

collapsed. In the riding school, before the eyes of other prisoners, some were picked out at random and beaten so that they collapsed covered in blood. Then they were dragged out, and a few shots were heard. Many Czech collaborators were also beaten to death there; for the first five days after my arrest we prisoners received no rations except for a bucket of water for 600 men. On the 6th day a cube of sugar and a cookie were issued. From the 7th day on we were given a thin soup, so that 15 to 20 people died of enfeeblement every day. When I was brought to Troppau I was severely beaten up. eight weeks the food parcels that my sistersentme to Troppau prison wereembezzled by the guards I can swear to this testimony."

Heinz Girsig:

"I was held in the Jauernig camp from June 1945 to March 1946 and was maltreated there myself several times, as a result of which I also lost two teeth. I also witnessed severe maltreatment and saw other prisoners martyred and shot. The two brothers Hauke, 16 and 18 years old, were shot in July by the deputy camp leader Katiorek, after a swastika had been cut into the buttocks of one of the boys with a knife the day before. Before that they had also been shot with blanks. We were often chased out at night and maltreated. Meißner from Krosse, a plumber from Zuckmantel and Hauke from Jauernig were beaten to death. I experienced the last maltreatment there in mid-February 1946."

Erika Grissmann:

"I was born on 4. 10. 1927 in Masshaupt near Kladno and lived with my parents continuously in Kladno since that time. So we do not belong to the Reich Germans who came to Kladno only after the annexation of the Protectorate.

On May 5, the uprising of the Czech underground movement broke out in Kladno. Armed members of the "Narodni Garda" blocked all streets, cleared the quarters of the German Wehrmacht and the military hospitals and threw the wounded into the streets. I saw the same stoned by the crowd. On May 6, 1945, the so-called house searches began, during which all German homes were ransacked indiscriminately. My father, an official at the Poldi Hut, was arrested on the evening of the same day and has remained missing ever since. I myself was slapped in the face by a Czech soldier during the first house search because I allegedly had not indicated where we had buried our jewelry. -255-

The following Monday, the waves of German persecution went particularly high. From the second floor of our house we saw countless German men running across the fields, trying to escape their pursuers, but being shot down like rabbits with machine guns. This fate struck every German without distinction, whether he was a civilian or a soldier, whether he was a party member or not.

On Wednesday the Russians moved into Kladno and at the same hour all German settlements were evacuated. I heard our Czech neighbor crying in the street. She told me that now it would soon be our turn, the Grissmanns, and that no one could help us. After a quarter of an hour, members of the Revolucni Garda came to our house. The leader, a big guy covered in blood, threw a hand grenade through the window. When he found me alone in the house with my mother and my 15-year-old brother, he threw me on the ottoman and said: "I won't rape you, the Russians will take care of that. While the Czechs were looting our house under constant threats, my mother

and brother escaped through the front gate, while I escaped through a window. We had to run gauntlets through our own street, Wras Street. The Czech crowd pounced on us and beat us up several times. Only a part of our former neighbors I saw crying from the windows.

Without any belongings, as we had fled from our house, we joined a group of refugees coming from the Unhozd area. Most of them were bleeding, because the Czechs threw hand grenades into the sad procession.

In a factory yard we had to stand against a wall with our hands up. First my fifteen-year-old brother was beaten with currycombs. Then several Czech women attacked me and my mother. My mother was bleeding all over her head. They took off my earrings and hair bows, then they wanted to cut off my braids. While this was going on, a Czech appeared and shouted loudly over the crowd, "The most beautiful ones come to the Russian officers."

We were then driven on and beaten again and again. Finally one of them caught me and pulled me into a car by the hair. I fainted.

When I woke up, I was lying on a sofa, bandaged at the head and hands. About five senior Russian officers were standing around me. One of them asked me if I was hungry and where I was going. I told him that I wanted to go to my mother. He then had a car take me to the soccer field, where I met my mother and brother right at the gate.

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When my mother saw me in this condition, she fell to her knees and screamed loudly that we should not be tortured any further and that we should finally be shot. She then collapsed unconscious. All this happened in Kladno on the morning of May 9, 1945. Shortly after noon we were herded in front of a pit and told that we would be shot there. But a Czech officer appeared and said that it was not yet that far.

We were loaded into a truck together with many other Germans and taken to the marketplace of Masshaupt. After we were spat at by the crowd and pelted with stones, we were taken back to the soccer field in Kladno.

Many German soldiers were lying on the ground with head and abdominal wounds, and no one was taking care of the seriously wounded. Then my mother collapsed. A German doctor whom I asked to help her was beaten up by the Czech guards. We then had to strip down to our shirts in the open square and were searched by the Czechs. We were then loaded back into cars and taken to the barracks in Kladno.

There I saw terrible things: civilians and soldiers were lying around in pools of blood, and no one could help them. Exceedingly large was the number of suicides, who wanted to escape the torment by a short way.

I saw a lot of small children whose parents had cut their necks in order to save them from further torture by their quick death. A Czech doctor, who had appeared with a nurse, put bandages on some of them. We were given nothing to eat during the whole time. In the afternoon we were suddenly told that we all had to lie down flat because there were blasts nearby. A tremendous detonation was heard. When the noise was over, a Czech very close to me said: "That wasn't close enough!"

On the afternoon of May 10, the seriously ill and severely wounded were loaded into ambulances, and the lightly wounded prepared to march out. In the meantime, a jeering crowd had gathered in front of the barracks gates, pelting us with stones.

A Czech read from a large sheet of paper an appeal in which he declared all Germans to be criminals. He shouted at us that we would have to atone for all this now, when we left the barracks. Suddenly hand grenades flew again into the crowd of German prisoners, causing a great bloodbath.

A Czech priest appeared and gave last rites to a crowd of dying people. Many of the wounded, however, rejected his offer.

At my mother's instigation, we managed to get into the ambulances un- -257-

to bring them here. I myself received a DRK hood from a German nurse, which allowed me to protect myself to some extent.

On the way from Kladno we were stopped by Russian sentries. A Red Army soldier opened our ambulance and asked me to come with him, since I was not a nurse at all. But the wounded men took up their positions for me. The Russian then declared that they should either give him all their watches or me. The seriously wounded German soldiers delivered all their watches and rings and bought me free in this way.

Our column went up toward the west of Bohemia. We soon had to leave the ambulances and joined large streams of refugees moving toward the American occupation zone. We got nothing to eat during the whole time. We slept mostly in open fields and were often harassed by Czech and Russian soldiers at night time. Among other things, several of the DRK nurses accompanying us were raped by Russian guards shortly before Petschau.

Together with my mother and brother, I finally made it to my grandparents in Hermannshütte, near Mies, where I first found work on a Czech farm. In November 1945, the Americans took me with them when they left for Bavaria."

Sebastian Herr:

"I am an ethnic German from Romania and worked as a tailor in the SS Intelligence School in Leitmeritz. In May 1945 I wanted to return to Romania, but was arrested in Prague and taken to Pankratz. There, on May 22, 1945, I and other prisoners had to dig up SS men who had died during the revolution and bury them in mass graves. In the process, I saw on the excavated corpses that ears and noses had been cut off, eyes drilled out and hands scalded. We worked with 60 men and were terribly beaten up during the work, so that many became unconscious. When we washed ourselves after working on the corpses, our heads were pushed into the dirty washing water. I was held until October 1946."

Mrs. Hildegard Hurtinger:

"On May 15, I was taken away from my Prague apartment by the Czech mob and dragged by the hair for about 500 meters to the Scharnhorst School under beatings and cudgels. There I was completely robbed, leaving only stockings and the dress I had on my body. A Czech commissar interrogated me and claimed that in 1942, at a time when I was not in Prague at all but in Teplice, I had brought 16 Czech persons to the concentration camp who had died there -258-

should. Every time I said no, I was slapped in the face. Then I was taken to the so-called separation, where I and my fellow prisoners, men and women, were cruelly maltreated. During the night the prisoners were repeatedly taken to the yard, where ten men, women and children each - including my two brothers and their families - were counted and shot in front of the other prisoners. My brother's youngest child was 5 months old.

Then we had to dig graves, strip and bury the bodies. In addition to the official executions, the prisoners were shot at random day and night, and countless defenseless people were killed. On one such occasion I was also wounded by a grazing shot in the neck. I remained lying under the corpses for a day and a night, not daring to get up. Then the Czechs climbed over the corpses and blindly stabbed those still alive with their sidearms. In the process I received a bayonet thrust in my left hand. However, I could not bear the pain and did not move. So I "saved" myself again into the separation. Once I did not get a bite to eat for 8 days. The children were given their meals in spittoons. Children who rejected them were beaten to death.

Pregnant women were taken out of the cells by armed Czechs, led to the yard, undressed there and beaten, then put into the lavatories and beaten until the fruit fell. I myself had to help remove the women who had perished in this way. For many days there were at least 10 women who died in this way.

During the day, groups of 6 to 8 women were led to work in St. Gotthard's Church. There we had to kiss the already decomposing corpses, pile them up and lick the floor of the church clean of the flowing blood. Czech riffraff supervised the work and beat us up constantly. I also saw how German men, among them an engineer dyer from the technical college, had the swastika burned into the palm of their hands with candles.

On May 20, 1945, we were taken to Wenceslas Square to work. There, before our eyes, German boys and girls, and also German prisoners of war were hung by their feet from candelabras and trees, doused with kerosene and set on fire.

I myself was at the Scharnhorst School until 9/19. The cruelties extended over the whole time without interruption. Then I was transferred to Pankratz and from there put to work in the Philips factories.

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On November 6, 1945, I was beaten with a rubber truncheon in the meanest way by the camp leader there because I had expressed the wish to go to church. It had been my wedding day."

Franz Kaupil: "On 13. 5. 1945 the reign of terror of the Czechs began in Iglau. The following night about 1200 Germans committed suicide. By Christmas there were about 2000 dead. On the 24th and 25th of May the German population was driven out of their homes within 20 minutes by partisans and locked up in the Helenental and Altenburg camps. These camps were officially designated as concentration camps. In Helenental 3700 persons were accommodated. In Altenberg about 3000. There was neither drinking nor utility watersufficiently

provided. There were no toilet facilities and no washing facilities. In the first 8 days there were no rations, later there was only thin soup and 100 g bread daily. Children were given a quart of milk after the first eight days. Every day several elderly people and small children died. On June 8, the inmates of Helenental were completely looted, and the next day they were led 33 km on foot via Telsch to Stangern. This was a death march. The people were driven with whips. The older people, when they collapsed, were led away by wagons. This march cost 350 people their lives due to exhaustion and hunger.

In Stangern, 3500 people were crammed into a camp with a capacity of 250. Most of them had to camp out in the open despite the rain. The next day the families were separated and placed in five different camps, divided into men, women and children. There was no food for 8 days. Then the usual soups. The treatment was inhumane. In the women's camp, four women were killed once with a shot and one was seriously wounded. Among them were Mrs. Friedl and Kerpes. Corporal punishment was the order of the day for both men and women. There was also a beating cell. The camp inmates were sold to the Czech farmers by the camp authorities as laborers. Conditions improved in August, but about 500 prisoners died in Stangern by Christmas. In January the Stangern camp was dissolved. I myself was remanded in custody on 9. 1. 1946 and released on 7. 8. 1946. There I heard from eyewitnesses or experienced the most terrible cruelties myself.

On 10. 6. 1945 16 prisoners from Iglau were taken out of their cells and shot in the Ranzenwald. Among them were the old town priest Honsik, Howorka, Augustin, Biskons, Brunner, Laschka, Martel, Kästler, etc. In the courthouse still in May 1945 were shot without any trial: Krautschneider, Kaliwoda, Müller and Ruffa. A certain Hoffmann was beaten to death. The most feared supervisor was Rydietzky. The factory owner Krebs was -260-

scalped. Baumeister Lang died as a result of maltreatment. Colonel Zobel, 70 years old, hanged himself in the cell. Many people are still detained in the prison as laborers, as they are used by the court personnel for personal work. Many people had been forced to make incriminating statements through the cruelest maltreatment and are now being held for offenses they did not even commit.

I can swear to this testimony and also produce other witnesses to it."

Theresia Lindenmeier:

"In Trotzau, around 12. 6. 1945, the entire population was rounded up by partisans. Then the names of the five people who were to be shot were read out. One of them was missing because he had not yet returned from the Wehrmacht. Thereupon the leader of the partisans tore up the paper with the names and declared that he would pick out 20 men from the crowd to shoot. He now randomly selected 20 men from the crowd; these were first beaten bloody by the entire population, then riddled with numerous bullets, so that they all collapsed in a heap. A few days earlier, the entire Bartl family from Trotzau, five persons, was shot. They were pulled out of the coffins procured by community at the cemetery and buried in a field beside the cemetery.

Around the same time in Krottersdorf near Trotzau a farmer's family, husband, wife and the 9-month-old child, was shot by partisans. In the neighboring village the husband and brother of the farmer's wife were shot. The farmer's wife had to dig a grave herself in the vegetable garden of the first farm and bury the persons. It was forbidden to speak of these incidents on pain of death.

I can swear to this testimony and bring many witnesses to it."

Ing. Franz Rösch:

"I was assigned to work at a burial detachment in Wokowitz from 12. 5. to 15. 5. 1945. There I saw how thousands of German soldiers and civilians - women and men, also youths from 10 years upwards - were murdered in the cruelest way. They were beaten to death by Czech revolutionary guardsmen, mostly with clubs, and to a lesser extent shot. Most of them were shot only to torture them, and then beaten to death. The terribly battered bodies were often rubbed with hydrochloric acid to torture them. A Dr. Blume from Berlin was assigned to determine the death of the people. Fingers were torn off people alive with rings. The dead were buried in a mass grave in Wokowitz at the cemetery. I then worked until 2. 5. 1946 at Bau- -261-

I had to use my left arm to load manure and do other heavy work. I had to load manure and do other heavy work with my left arm. When I could no longer do the work, I was sent to the Kladno penal camp on May 2. There I saw how the prisoners were smeared with hot tar on their bare backs or buttocks and then terribly beaten. I myself was beaten daily during the two months I was there. My right kidney was knocked loose so that I was

then admitted to Schlan Hospital."

Josef Röder:

"I was arrested on May 7, 1945 and sent to the Olmütz-Hodoleln camp, where I was held until June 30, 1945. I myself was severely maltreated several times a day, during which, among other things, 3 ribs were broken. I witnessed many other maltreatments on a daily basis. I saw 15 people beaten to death or shot. Among them were the bookseller Große, the war invalid Leopold Klier, the metal goods dealer Karl Kleibel, the pauper Franz Lehar, the state railway councillor Albin Raschovsky, Dr. Zebo and others. Particularly active as murderers were: Oldrich Vy-tovsky from Olmütz, Josef Schneider, student Pospischil, a painter Rösner and others. When I reproached them, encouraged by a personal consultation with Prime Minister Fierlinger on the occasion of a visit to the camp, I was officially informed that these fatal maltreatments had taken place on the orders of the camp commissary Antonsch."

Hildegard Reichel:

"When I was sent to the Troppau camp in June 1945, I was beaten up twice by the Czech Großmann. In December I was released. To escape the constant abuse and harassment, I wanted to cross the border. In Eger I was arrested and imprisoned for 2 months. In May of that year I witnessed six executions by hanging there. On 5. 5. 1946 I was released. When I returned to Troppau, I was immediately arrested again and beaten up."

Robert Rief:

"I stayed in Saaz until October 10, 1945, and had the opportunity to witness everything that had been going on in my hometown since the overthrow days. On May 7, the Russians, coming from the Ore Mountains, occupied the town with tanks, which was overcrowded with refugees of all kinds and with the columns of the German front in Moravia flooding back, as well as with numerous wounded in the military hospitals.

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On June 3, the Czechs took over the administration, arrested the entire male population without distinction of party affiliation and took them to a camp in Postelberg. There the Germans were crammed by the thousands into the barracks yard and left without any food. On the morning of the fourth of June, members of the Revolutionary Guard appeared and fired indiscriminately into the crowd. Besides many wounded, there were three dead, including my acquaintance Heidenreich.

The Czech policeman Marek went through the camp and killed Germans with his revolver, also without any reason. Five 13- to 15-year-old boys, among them little Körner, whose father had to watch the execution, were lined up against the wall and shot without any prior trial. Of those shot without any particular reason, the following were known to me: Master Builder Heinzl, Captain Langer, the chemist Hausmann. I estimate the number of Germans shot in Postelberg at 600.

On June 13, after all the men had already been taken away, all the German women were taken to a camp in Saaz, namely to the former SS barracks. There, conditions were like those of a beast. The Czech guards trampled the women, including expectant mothers, underfoot and indiscriminately ordered them to perform menial services.... In the evening, the gates of the camp opened to the Russian soldiers, who pounced on the women like wild animals and raped them. They showed no consideration for their surroundings, but did violence to their victims in public. The Czechs amused themselves by watching. Among others, the daughter of the merchant Pichen was raped in the presence of her mother, who had to lie in bed above her. At the end of June all women had to strip naked. They pretended to look for hidden jewelry on them. This also happened in the presence of the children ..."

Elsa Rotter:

"After the end of the war the members of the Soviet army looted Landskron for days. Much worse than them were the Czechs, who after the departure of the Russians established a real reign of terror in Landskron. Partisans from the area around Königgrätz organized a massacre among the Germans, which became generally known under the name "Landskroner Blutgericht". At the head of these events, which took place in June 1945, was the mill owner Hrabacek, from Weipersdorf, a former client of my husband. Under the pretext of searching for weapons, the Czech mob pounced on the German population and, without distinction of age, political attitude

(party affiliation, etc.), rounded up all the men in the marketplace of Landskron. There they had to fight with
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About 50 men (among them Ing. Neugebauer, Ing. Dietrich, a 50-year-old old man and the head of the tax office Jenisch) were then hanged from the candelabra without trial. The screams of the martyred could be heard throughout the city. About a hundred elderly men were thrown into a water basin built for air-raid protection purposes. Hitler Youths who had been brought in were forced to prevent the victims from leaving the basin. My husband, a doctor and an elderly teacher were the only ones in our street to escape the carnage because they were warned not to leave by a Czech friend who assured them, "We are human beings too."

Alfred Schubert:

"On the Tuesday after Whitsun, from the carpenter's workshop where I was an apprentice, the 7 workers between the ages of 16 and 60 were led by the Czech partisans to the marketplace of Grulich, where they were tortured and maltreated in the cruelest manner. Other Germans were also severely maltreated there at the same time. Three were shot on the spot - among them a woman. One of our victims died of his injuries the next day. They were beaten with heavy clubs, chains and scourges."

Hans Strobel:

"On May 9, 1945, I reported with my family to the Prague police in accordance with the request and was held in Pankratz for 14 days. All the prisoners were maltreated in the most severe manner, just as I was. On May 26, 1945 I was taken to Theresienstadt with a transport of 6000 people - men, women and children. On arrival there we were beaten indiscriminately with clubs, axe handles, rifle butts, etc. in the cruelest manner. 59 men were beaten to death; they were mostly older men who could not run fast enough. About 200 people died in the next period as a result of the maltreatment. I myself had my elbow joints and ulna and spokes broken in the process. There was no medical help available."

Ernst Schorz:

"I was taken to the camp on August 27, 1945, probably at the instigation of the Czech administrator of my farm near Moravian Ostrava. There I was found unfit to work in the mines and sent to the brick warehouse at Mährisch-Ostrau. On the way there we were all beaten and trampled underfoot. In this camp I was assigned to a burial column and worked -264-

three weeks in this. During these weeks we had to take the deceased of the camp to the Palatzky cemetery and bury them there. During the three weeks I took about 200 corpses from the Hanke camp in Moravian Ostrava to the cemetery. They were mostly mutilated. Some of them had their arms and legs chopped off, and there were also many female corpses among them. The corpses were first buried at the cemetery and after three weeks they were dug up again and burned in the crematorium. From my friend Krischke from Klantendorf near Fulnek I heard the following on his deathbed, he had experienced it as an eyewitness. His wife, 8 months pregnant, had to stand naked against the wall in the Hanke camp and was beaten on the stomach with clubs until the fruit fell off and she herself died. Krischke, who was in the Hanke camp for a long time, further told me that he was an eyewitness how a woman, with her hands and feet tied behind her back, was pulled up against a wall and had both breasts cut off with a knife. I myself was severely maltreated in the brick camp, as were all the prisoners. All my teeth on the right side were knocked out and I suffered sprains of the hands and arms. The camp leader urged that two guards who had maltreated me be punished. At the trial, however, the judge declared, "He is a German, they should have beaten him more."

Karl Schneider:

"I was interned in the Thomasdorf camp for 14 months. I was brought in on 15.6.1945. I was accused of having shot a Czech in 1938. I was maltreated in the most severe and cruel way. In four weeks I was beaten 16 times, one by one, at different times of the night. Rubber truncheons, whips, chains, squared lumber, etc. were used. Each time I was beaten until I was unconscious. Three ribs were kicked in, my teeth were knocked in, and my shin was injured. When I fell to the ground, shots were fired into the ground to the right and left of my head, a wolfhound was set on me, etc. On August 1, 1945 I was transferred to the Adlersdorf camp, where I was also

maltreated. On August 17, Franz Schubert from Niklasdorf had to slap me. Since he did not do it strongly enough, he received a blow to the face that caused him to drop dead. That same night Comrade Schiebl was also beaten to death, and 16-year-old Knoblich from Hermannstadt was shot, after cruel tortures all night long. On July 20, 1946 my innocence had already been proven by a witness statement. My first interrogation, however, took place only on August 10, 1946, after which I was released. In Thomasdorf I also witnessed the terrible torture of Dr. Pablowsky from Freiwaldau, who succumbed to his injuries on August 30, 1946." -265-

Rudolf Zebisch:

"I came home from the Wehrmacht in May 1945, was arrested by the Czechs in Leitmeritz and sent to the Theresienstadt camp. During the arrest I was severely maltreated by the Czechs. Five of my comrades were beaten to death in the process. In Theresienstadt itself, maltreatment was the order of the day. Until November 1945 the prisoners were maltreated every night. In April 1946 the maltreatment began again and continued until my release in June. Of four transports that came to Theresienstadt from Prague in June and July 1945, about 200 people were beaten to death each time they arrived. A German medical orderly told me in May that the number of registered dead in Theresienstadt up to that time was 1500. In addition, many perished there who were not registered. I myself helped every day for the first six weeks in removing the corpses from the cells. Every day there were 30 to 45 dead bodies that were taken to the crematorium on a ladder truck without being registered. I myself saw with my own eyes how about 50 people were beaten to death with clubs. Among those beaten to death were also women. I myself heated a boiler from June 1945 until my release at the end of June 1946. I was also repeatedly beaten and trampled on at work.

I can swear to these statements and also provide other witnesses to them."

Nameless:

"On 28. 5. 1945 I was arrested in Welhenitz, Bilin district, on the farm of my father-in-law. I was tied up, beaten and finally taken by car to Welpet. There, tied hand and foot, I was knocked unconscious three times in a row and then thrown into a one-man bunker. In Welpet eleven Sudeten German peasants had already been shot on May 22, 1945 by the command of Czech Lieutenant Cerny. By chance I escaped the same fate and saw how in the camp people were daily maltreated, shot or beaten to death with a hammer like cattle. Lieutenant Cerny personally carried out most of the shootings, and I personally saw about 20 killings in the further course. Among other things, I myself had to lick the blood-stained boots of Lieutenant Cerny. After about 14 days I myself was taken to Prague to be shot. There it was determined that there were no grounds for punishment against me, and I was transferred to the Rusin camp, where I again witnessed countless maltreatments." -266-

A nameless man tells:

"On April 26, 1945, the battle of Brunn was over; in the first hours of the afternoon the Russians entered Brunn, the capital of Moravia. The national forces of the Czechs, especially the members of the former Sokol organizations, which had been freed by this, escorted the Russian soldiers with their communist leaders into the homes of the ethnic Germans and also of the collaborators and handed them over to be looted. Not only jewelry and monetary values, but also material assets were expropriated and the remaining furniture was rendered useless.

The German-speaking population, especially girls and women, as far as they were captured, were sent to the college, where they remained in barracks and had to make themselves available to the Russian troops. From here, many of them, sexually ill and internally torn, were transported to hospitals, where they were given superficial treatment, lying in basement rooms.

Repeatedly, the Germans who had remained in their homes were suddenly gathered together block by block, allowed to take only the bare necessities with them, and had to go to the collection camp. Such camps were located in Obrowitz in a railroad tunnel, on Kleidovka and in Malmeritz, all suburbs of Brunn. Here they were beaten up by communist elements, who were responsible for guarding them, to such an extent that cases of broken ribs and other internal injuries, even deaths, were recorded. The dead were stripped of all their belongings, the naked corpses were shoveled onto cloths with pitchforks and then dragged on the ground to the nearest forest, where they were buried.

Volksdeutsche were also used for this work, driven to increased speed with rods and then returned injured themselves. These operations were repeated several times during the months of April and May and gave the

perpetrators the opportunity to rob the last remnants of property from the empty dwellings. Such robberies were protected by the authorities, namely by the notice that the property of the Germans in Czechoslovakia had to be confiscated on the account of the Reich Germans reparations. Even old age was not spared from the maltreatment. Even people over 70 years of age remained wounded in the ditch with broken limbs, where they succumbed to exhaustion.

These events were repeated in all other towns of the CSR and even in the countryside. The scattered Germans, living as single families in Czech towns, were driven out of their homes by the incited inhabitants under the leadership of communist functionaries, the men were often beaten to death, and the women and girls were made to work for the red troops during the day and then seduced by them at night.

-267. Among these rapes were not only children of 8, 10 and 12 years of age, but also old women up to 80 years of age, the latter as well as many other women succumbed to sexual overstimulation. Many German soldiers were attacked, plundered, beaten to death or hanged by the Czech gymnasts (Sokoin), and corpses were found with the most impossible and cruel injuries. These corpses were also buried in the woods.

The Volksdeutsche teacher from Zinsendorf near Brünn, 55 years old, was dragged by the Sokoin into the gymnasium and there laid face down on the floor. Under the leadership and incitement of a certain Nowotny, a Czech from Zinsendorf, a group of young Sokoin had to beat her with their feet, jump on her and hit her in the face with the heels of their shoes. In a severely injured condition, with a dislocated lower jaw, she was driven with iron rods and, with similarly worked-up Volksdeutschedriven 10 km on foot to Brno, where they were locked up in the college until they succumbed to exhaustion and wounds

The uniformity and planned execution of all these persecutions clearly proved that this action was ordered and initiated by a uniformly superior authority.

In the evening hours of May 30, 1945, the ethnic Germans of Brno and also of the Brno linguistic islands were taken out of their apartments by the police and gendarmerie and, under the pretense that they had to go back to a camp, and this only for a few days, were gathered together, the hand luggage taken along was subjected to a renewed "revision", robbed several times, then the Germans were driven out of Brno onto the road to Vienna under the supervision of partisans (Czechs). For the drive they used specially woven rods with steel pieces woven into them. These emigrants of all ages, including children and even old people over 70, had to cover the distance of 154 km to Vienna. The train also passed by the Brno Central Cemetery, where it witnessed an officially ordered desecration of the cemetery. The monuments were overturned and all the German graves desecrated. The road from Brno to Vienna became a death road for many ethnic Germans. Many succumbed to maltreatment, exhaustion and hunger. There were already so many corpses in the road ditches that the neighboring villages were unable to bury them in due time. In Pohrlitz itself 4000 Germans found their death, on the Muschelberg near Nikolsburg 800 Brno citizens are buried. Famine typhus and dysentery claimed more and more victims. The march lasted 8 to 10 days and presented a picture of boundless misery and unspeakable suffering. It was an unspeakable mockery of all humanity."

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Edeltraut Friedel:

"In response to a telegram from my husband, I left for Prague at the beginning of May 1945. There, upon my arrival, I was arrested and sent to the Pankratz Penitentiary. At the same time, about 10,000 people were incarcerated in Pankratz. Of these, many were shot or beaten to death, and many starved to death. I myself was severely maltreated there several times, saw for myself how many were beaten to death. One man was pushed against the wall with his head in front of his wife and children until he was dead. I saw children smashed on the floor in front of their mothers and especially pregnant women severely maltreated."

*

For all that is horrific, almost unspeakable, there is no atonement; no justice for the survivors and surviving relatives of these victims of unprecedented cruelty.

On the contrary, the case of the Czech murderer Frantisek Kroupa, mentioned at the beginning of this article, shows documentarily that not only the East, but also the West protects the mass murders of the Czechs against the Germans and does not think of punishing them.

Kroupa committed numerous crimes against humanity, from robbery to murder, as a commissar of the St. Jáchymov District National Committee.

On May 12, 1945, a handful of armed Czechs calling themselves the National Committee (narodni vybor) took over the rule in the world-famous radium spa of Jáchymov. On the mayor's office appeared a certain Frantisek Kroupa, who had worked earlier as an employee in the state tobacco factory of Jáchymov. He introduced himself to the acting German mayor Franz Schmidt as a representative of the Czech government and demanded the handover of the office and the police. After the promise that order and security would be maintained at all costs, the requested handover took place. Kroupa now officiated from May 15, issuing all orders, directives and signing as chairman of the Czech District National Committee.

One day later, on May 16, the parents' house of Emil S., which was located opposite Kroupa's command post, was surrounded. Frantisek Kroupa, wearing a sand-colored sports suit, entered the house with more than 10 heavily armed Czechs. The men spread out on all floors and wanted to start a thorough search of the house.

Emil S. drew Kroupa's attention to the fact that the house had three floors with a total of 52 doors, all of which were locked because they were used by escape- -269-

The door was occupied by refugees, bombed-out people, soldiers and Red Cross nurses. He was, however, immediately ready to unlock any door properly. But Kroupa and his cronies preferred to break down the doors with their rifle butts. Then they stole what was not nailed down.

In front of the house "Urania" in Jáchymov the brakes of a hold-up commando car screeched. Six men and a woman led by Frantisek Kroupa stormed into the house. "Get ready," they yelled at Mrs. Pohl and her son, "in twenty minutes you have to be outside." When the woman asked what was going on, they said, "You'll see." Mr. Pohl, who was still in office as head of the local health insurance fund of Jo-achimsthal, was still in the office. His wife therefore asked him to wait with the expulsion until he had been fetched. Thereupon a young gendarme drove to Pohl's office and took him into his house, having previously torn off his red and white armband with the inscription "Ochranen narodnim vybozem", i.e. "protected by the narodni vybor". In five minutes the Pohl family had to leave their house. Their wedding rings were torn from their fingers, their watches from their pockets, their wallets were emptied and they were allotted only seven marks per person. Mrs. Pohl was deprived of a good coat and given the worst of her seven coats. Kroupa remarked, "Don't need that, you will get blue work clothes." Then the looters distributed their looted items before the eyes of the Pohl family. Finally, the Pohls were strip-searched, and the son was found to have 5000 marks. One of the men slapped him so hard that his glasses flew into the other corner of the room. Kroupa commented dryly, "We'll put him up against the wall."

While a number of Jáchymov citizens were tortured to death by Czech partisans in neighboring Schlackenwerth, Kroupa reserved the right to have an execution carried out in Jáchymov, the witnesses of which are innumerable. Under the threat of the death penalty, the entire Jáchymov population had to appear in front of the town hall at 3 p.m. on June 4, 1945. Not suspecting anything good, the frightened people waited. Suddenly a Czech appeared on the ramp of the town hall and announced that the sawmill owner and fire chief Max Steinfelsner had been sentenced to death by hanging by the People's Court. A horror went through the limbs of all present as the delinquent was led to a tree where the execution was to be carried out. No one was allowed to leave the place, everyone had to witness the horrible deed. Two Germans had to put the noose around Steinfelsner's neck. When the Germans had to carry out the execution involuntarily, cries of -270 rang out in the crowd, and many people had to be taken from the scene of this horrible act. Several more pistol shots were fired at the executed man hanging from the tree.

On the same day that Jáchymov was the scene of this exciting spectacle, Otto Patek's house was searched under Kroupa's personal direction, which ended with Patek's arrest after extensive looting. On Kroupa's orders he was then sent to the notorious Schlackenwerth camp.

In this hell, as he describes today, Patek was bestially maltreated along with another 37 Germans. On the day of his incarceration, he was taken to the dance hall of the former "Gasthaus zum Franzosen". There, already inmates stood beaten bloody against the walls. Patek had to line up with them. The Czechs now closed all the doors and set up two guards with machine pistols. The unfortunates now had to bare their upper bodies and were beaten with rubber truncheons, leather and steel whips until their flesh hung off their bodies and they collapsed, covered in blood. Then they were brought back to their senses with buckets of cold water, and the cruel game was repeated anew. In this way they were maltreated three times by day and three times by night.

On the night of June 5-6, eleven or twelve Czechs came to the dance hall and brought a bench and blankets with which to cover the windows. The first to be seized was the master watchmaker Müller from Jáchymov, who was laid on the bench and while still alive had his ears cut off with a knife, his eyes gouged out, his mouth pierced with a bayonet, his teeth knocked out and his bones broken by laying his arms and legs over the bench. Since he was still alive, they tied barbed wire twice around his neck and dragged him around the hall until the body gave no more sign of life. During this dragging around, a Czech had stood on Müller's body so that it was weighted down. The corpse was only a lump of flesh, which was wrapped in a coat and placed in the middle of the hall. Six other men were murdered in this manner that night, including three Reich German soldiers. "Witnessing this drove three inmates insane and brought me close to insanity myself," Patek reported. In addition to the watchmaker Müller, the forester Kraus and the master carpenter Zechel from Jáchymov were also killed that night, he said. "All arrests and admissions from Jáchymov (to Schlackenwerth) were carried out at the instigation of Kroupa," Otto Patek concluded his report.

"The cruel murders at the instigation of the Czech Commissar Kroupa, namely of Wilhelm Kühn, proprietor of the hotel "Stadt Wien

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(skull smashed beyond recognition), to head forester Kraus (whose fingernails had previously been torn out with pliers) and to master saddler Viertel (beaten to death with a large hammer), I can also confirm," Emil Scheithauer, last resident of St. Jáchymov, No. 148, stated in lieu of an oath. Scheithauer himself was also arrested on Kroupa's orders and taken to a forced camp with other 50 Jáchymov residents.

Later, Kroupa escaped to the West and was discovered in the DP camp Murnau by those formerly tormented by him. When the Sudeten Germans tried to take criminal action against Kroupa, this executioner was taken out of the country by the Americans....

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The entry of the "Soldiers of Christ "Liberation" by the Western Allies

Unfortunately, the atrocities and crimes described above, to which German people in the East and Southeast were helplessly exposed, were not a privilege of the Poles, the dehumanized Bolshevik soldiery of the Red Army, the Czechs or the Tito partisans. Even among the Western Allies, whose battle cry was "Forward, Christian Soldiers" after Winston Churchill's slogan, there were many who entered the German lands looting, stealing, robbing, raping and murdering.

On April 16, 1945, in the formation of the VI Corps of the 7th U.S. Army, the army of General Jean de Lattre de Tassigny pushed through the Black Forest. In the lead was the 3rd Moroccan Spahi Regiment under then Major Maria Ferdinande de Castries.

Although there was not a single fighting German unit in Freudenstadt and the town had over 1,500 wounded under the care of Oberfeldarzt Dr. Bauer, the regiment prepared to attack and began shelling the defenseless town with 15.5-cm guns. Oberfeldarzt Dr. Bauer raced to the Waldhotel Stockinger, where at that time a General v. Alberti was with a few staff men. General Alberti radioed the attacking French three times in plain language that the town was completely free of German troops up to 10 km around.

The radio messages were picked up, but the French did not respond at all and kept firing until Freudenstadt was in flames.

It was not until 10 a.m. the next day that the first French tanks ventured into the destroyed marketplace of the burning town of Freudenstadt. The first order given was: Set fire extinguishers!

But not enough, the Moroccans had the right to loot and any freedom for days. The entire city center, at least 650 houses, went up in flames, countless wounded perished in the flames with dozens of civilians. More than 500 women and girls reported to the doctors after the horrible days because they had been raped.

"Der Fortschritt," Düsseldorf, published on August 3, 1951, a list of incidents with which the French "liberated" Germany.

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In Schramberg (Black Forest) on April 20, 1945, Mrs. Hilde Mall was suspected of having possessed a weapon, without the allegation being proven. She was taken away by the French on April 20. To this day, the French

authorities have not provided any information about her whereabouts. (Affidavit of the former mayor Beiter, Schramberg).

In Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt on April 22, 1945, two Frenchmen were killed and one wounded in a short battle with regular German Wehrmacht. Dr. Dipper, a 53-year-old doctor living nearby, took care of the wounded Frenchman. The following day, the doctor was taken from his apartment by a French officer with a pistol and shot after a short interrogation. His wife, who wanted to rush to him because he was still breathing, was driven back by the soldiers. The next day they brought her as a last greeting a five-mark bill on which Dr. Dipper had written before his death: "I am innocent."

(Testimony of Ms. Dipper and druggist Renz before the Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt Local Court)

Äff städt in Württemberg was occupied by the French on April 22, 1945. Four days later, in a house on the outskirts of the village, occupying soldiers took four men out of a circle of eleven gathered for prayer without justification and killed them in the backyard by shots to the head. Among them were a father of five children, a 21-year-old war-disabled man who had lost a leg in Russia, and a boy from Pforzheim aged 15. (Affidavit of Mayor Sattler of Affstädt).

In Engen (Baden), on April 24, 1945, two hours after the occupation, the 68-year-old retired frigate captain Albert Scheibe, who was reprimanding a girl for offering herself undignified to the French tank soldiers, was beaten by a tank soldier who had followed him, forced into a side alley, shot dead by seven shots from a submachine gun. The French commander, who was sitting on one of the nearest tanks, did not intervene. (Protocol of the Gendarmerie Engen [Baden])

Fornsbach (Backnang district [Württ.]) was occupied by French troops on April 27, 1945. During the looting of the Erdbeer house, the wife was harassed by an officer. He demanded that she follow him into the cellar. She refused. The 56 year old husband, Fritz Erdbeer, was then taken away as a hostage. He was to be exchanged for jewelry worth ten- -274-

send Marks as ransom to be released the next morning. When Frau Erdbeer brought the jewels, she found her husband dead. The body had been thrown on a dung heap. Judging from the wounds, Erdbeer had been shot in the back. (Documents of the mayor's office of Fornsbach)

On April 30, 1945, August Vornfett, born on March 28, 1896, and Ernst Kramer, born on April 30, 1900, were arrested from their homes in Schiltach (Baden) by the French officer Alland, who appeared accompanied by the Hungarian Etienne Szakall and the German anti-fascist Franz Albert Agethen. Vornfett's wife later described the events to German authorities as follows:

"Into my apartment came a French officer and a Hungarian named Szakall, living in Schiltach, who demanded my husband. I went into the kitchen and wanted to call him, when they already pushed open the kitchen door and raised their rifles against my husband. Then they took him away and brought him to the inn "Zum Bären". From there he was driven away in the afternoon in the van of Agethen from Schiltach together with Ernst Kramer in the direction of Wolfach. The car then stopped at the Rappenfelsen, according to the residents of the Rappensteiner Hof. Shortly thereafter several shots were fired in the nearby forest. During the search, the bodies of my husband and Ernst Kramer were found."

It was not until the 2nd time that Mrs. Vornfett received the news of her husband's murder. In the hospital she was informed that the death of her husband had occurred by shots in the stomach and neck.

But not enough with the miserable murder: The funeral of the two Germans murdered by the French officer Alland had to take place by order of the French command without escort, without bell ringing and without spectators. Only the closest relatives were allowed to attend the silent funeral.

When, two years later, the German authorities dealt with the accomplices Szakall and Agethen, they were deprived of the investigation with reference to the decision of the "Direction Regionale du Contrôle de la Justice Allemande" of December 6, 1946. In addition, a French military court, which had seized the case, acquitted the two accomplices Szakall and Agethen in Freiburg (Breisgau) on December 19, 1947.

The French Lieutenant Deletre and the French Lieutenant Schwab, together with the Czech Milan Kovar, captured 55 National Socialists and employees of the "German Oil Shale Research Company" for their private amusement after the invasion in April 1945, in order to set up a private concentration camp with them in Dormettingen.

The prisoners were tortured in the cruelest way. The medical report of the prisoner Arno Schreiber, who survived the hell of Dormettingen, read: "25 wounds on the head, partly down to the bone, sense of balance disturbed, both eyes injured, nose bone broken, three teeth knocked out of upper jaw, sternum and three ribs broken. Shoulder capsule broken several times on left side, collarbone broken, right hip joint injured, both hands, both knees and ankle injured."

Besides endless beatings and tortures, the two French officers amused themselves by shooting bottles on the heads of the prisoners. Sometimes the shot missed. At least seventeen of the prisoners were murdered, others took their own lives voluntarily. Of the victims of the Allied re-education in Dormettingen, among whom were two unnamed Frenchmen and a Dutchman who were shot on May 25, the following names are known:

Hübner, Schörzingen, 2. 5. 1945, shot dead
Daniu, Ukrainian, 6. 5. 1945, shot dead
Bricklayer, Dottingen, between 6. and 12. 5. 1945 suicide due to torture
Schneider, Zwickau, murdered, skull bashed in
Ludwig, Schömberg, murdered by cane blows across the abdomen
Schmid, Schörzingen, shot about 12. 5. 1945
Schosser, Schömberg, shot about 12. 5. 1945
Rebstock, Dotternhausen, died 20. 5. 1945 as a result of maltreatment
Haas, Dormettingen, shot 21. 5. 1945
Miller, Augsburg, shot 25. 5. 1945
Klug, Peter, Gößlingen, shot 25. 5. 1945
Kirchhardt, Metzingen, shot 25. 5. 1945.

In 1951, a French military court in Rottweil dealt with the torture at Dormettingen on the basis of German investigations. During the trial, the former commercial manager of the oil-shale research company exposed as an informer drawn up the arrest list for the French on April 24, 1945 and had checked off the detainees from his list at the French commandant's office. For theft and participation in torture and murder in Dormettingen, a certain Helmer-Sandmann received fifteen years in prison. The two French officers and the Czech were allegedly untraceable.

The Lord Mayor of Freiburg, Dr. Franz Kerber, was arrested by the French in the May days of 1945 and shackled in chains in the -276-.

Freiburg state prison. There he was interrogated by the Surete-officier Goubaud. A short time later, Dr. Kerber, who had always advocated friendly relations between the Germans and the French and was known throughout the city as an irreproachable personality, was taken out of prison again by the French, allegedly to be taken to France. From that moment on, for the time being, there was no trace of him.

In the fall of 1945, the Attorney General of the State of Baden, Dr. Bader, appeared at Mrs. Kerber's home and presented her with sandals and scraps of cloth which she was able to identify as belonging to her husband. Attorney General Bader then informed Mrs. Kerber that they had found her husband's horribly mutilated body in the Schaumsland area of Freiburg, which was buried nameless in a corner of the Freiburg cemetery. Dr. Bader said that she was forbidden to speak about it, to wreath the grave, to put a cross on it, and to wear mourning clothes.

In response to an inquiry by a major newspaper seeking to clarify the case, "Der Fortschritt", Düsseldorf, reported on June 15, 1951, that the Chief Public Prosecutor of Freiburg, dated March 14, 1951, stated:

"In response to your letter, which was sent to us for immediate settlement, we have the honor to inform you that the public prosecutor's office in Freiburg i. Br. discontinued the investigation on November 21, 1945, on the instructions of the French occupation authorities, and handed it over to them for further prosecution. Since Dr. Kerber was in French custody, the alleged perpetrators are not subject to German jurisdiction. We do not have any documents to answer their further questions."

Like Dr. Kerber, the detective superintendent Traub from Freiburg was taken away by the French. His body was also found with shots to the neck, but only poorly buried.

Two days after the French invasion of the community of Hallwangen, the deputy mayor Gottlob Dieterle and the small farmer Karl Hofer disappeared. They had previously been arrested by the French and locked up in a

somewhat secluded house.

On April 27, a citizen of the neighboring community of Lützenhardt excitedly reported to the Hallwangen town hall that two bodies were lying in the woods about 10 minutes from the village. They were identified as the missing Gottlob Dieterle and Karl Hofer. The corpses showed clear signs of severe maltreatment; the unfortunates had been killed by shots to the neck.

At noon on April 22, 1945, at about 12 noon, all combat operations in and around Reutlingen ceased. Two days later, four Reutlingen -277-

Citizens arrested without giving reasons. They were the chief physician of the Reutlingen hospitals, Dr. Wilhelm Egloff, father of three children, the wounded architect Wilhelm Schmid, the editor Ludwig Ostertag, father of seven children, and the master carpenter Jakob Schmid, father of seven children. They were simply told that they were being held hostage because a French officer had been struck down in the town.

They were taken to a private house on Urbanstraße, where French officers were quartered. No investigation and no court martial took place.

The Catholic city priest of Reutlingen, Keicher, later reported that he was visited by a French military chaplain at about 2 p.m. on April 24. In a protocol, Stadtpfarrer Keicher stated: "This military chaplain asked me to go with him to give spiritual assistance to four Germans who were being shot as hostages. Since I assumed that perhaps one of the hostages would belong to the Protestant church, I also notified the Protestant pastor. I could not reach him personally; so it came about that I alone gave spiritual assistance to these men condemned to death, or rather, men destined for death, and was the only German to be with the men until their death. I was taken by the French clergyman to a private house belonging to Professor Mautz. In this house were French officers and the four Reutlingen citizens who were to be shot as hostages. The four hostages were very receptive to my spiritual encouragement. I arranged for the hostages to be given the opportunity to write a few last lines to their relatives. I delivered these lines to the relatives myself. They were completely unaware of the fate that had befallen their breadwinners. The hostages were arrested from among their families only in the early noon hours of April 24, 1945, and were shot between 3 and 4 p.m. of the same day, a few hours later. I had to confirm that all four hostages went to their deaths upright and brave. The senior field physician of the reserve, Dr. Egloff, who was among the hostages and who was in charge of the Reutlingen hospitals, wore the uniform of a medical officer of the German Wehrmacht. In this uniform he was also shot."

Neither the people who were shot nor their relatives nor the population were ever told where and when and which French officer had been struck down. When the relatives were later summoned by the defense as witnesses at the Nuremberg trial, they were summoned to the French security authority, where Capitaine Brunel forced the relatives to sign a document written in French.

Years later, the municipal council of Reutlingen unanimously decided to -278-

to present the surviving dependents of these murdered persons with an honorary gift of DM 10,000 each.

In the notorious French internment camp Hufingen near Donaueschingen, 83 of 484 internees died. Many took their own lives, others were murdered or died as a result of the "treatment" by the French and their helpers.

Many were not even known by name to the surviving internees. Numerous Alsations and Frenchmen were also murdered in this camp. On June 16, 1945, the two ethnic Germans Michael Kewaleschka and Gregor Miklosch were shot. The following day, the Frenchman Paul Victor Chaussin. On July 15, Friedrich Wilhelm and Josef Gillmann were murdered here. In all cases it was said "deceased".

In the prison of Überlingen, Amtsgerichtsrat Werner was murdered, in the area of Kißlegg pharmacists Bohner, Rendle and many others. In Oberlauchringen the customs secretary Moosbrugger was murdered by the French. In Blasiwald, the innkeeper Beck was murdered when he tried to prevent the rape of his daughter.

Murdered near Gundelfingen on May 5: Tschiggfrei, Handloser and Karl Knieß. On the march to Offenburg, between Gundelfingen and Denzlingen, the farmer Fehsenmeier was murdered, and in Rastatt Dr. Riedel, the dentist Höß, Haegle, Klein, Klump and Otto Matt were maltreated to such an extent that they died as a result.

In Markdorf in the district of Überlingen, on May 2, 1945, a French patrol of three men stopped a German civilian and wanted to loot him. The civilian resisted the thorough strip search. Thereupon the civilian suddenly drew a pistol. In the ensuing shootout he slightly wounded two Frenchmen. He managed to escape.

Now the French local commander ordered the mayor Eugen Grieshaber, who had already been mayor during the Nazi era, and his predecessor in office, Wilhelm Kahles, to immediately name ten citizens of Markdorf who were

to be summarily shot "as a deterrent". Both mayors steadfastly refused to comply with this order. Grieshaber told the French local commander, "I'm not naming anyone. You'd better shoot me!"

Thereupon, the French officer became uneasy. In the middle of the meeting, four civilians were led in by a French soldier. They were the Landesschützen Daniel Lichtenfels, Wilhelm Zimmer, Walter Frey and Franz Bodenmüller. They had long since thrown away their weapons and uniforms and were on their way to their families. Lichtenfels had a wife and nine children, Zimmer a wife and five children, Frey a wife and three children. Only Bodenmüller was still unmarried.

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The local commander now ordered that the four should be shot as a deterrent example for Markdorf.

At the town church 400 French soldiers marched up in a square, the mayors Grieshaber and Kahles as well as the town priest Boch were ordered to the execution. When the four Germans, who were completely innocent and behaved in an extremely manly manner, were brought in, French soldiers brought the body of a horribly mutilated German civilian in a truck. The body was later determined to be former corporal Kurt Bischof, who had been in civilian clothes on his way to his Rhenish homeland. The French unhooked the cellar door of the Kullmann estate, tied Obergefreite Bischof in the shape of a cross on the cellar door, which they placed over the wall in front of which the four Landesschützen were already standing to be shot.

The execution peloton fired so badly that Bodenmüller was still standing after the first volley. He shouted, "My Savior, I am innocent!" After a second volley, Franz Bodenmüller jumped up again and shouted again, "My Savior, I am innocent." The French officer then approached him and shot him in the neck.

When the "Revue" published this salacious incident in full detail at the end of February 1951, it was banned and confiscated in the French zone and in the then French-occupied Saarland because, in the opinion of the French High Commissariat, it was likely to "endanger the reputation and security of the French occupying power".

On the night of July 7, 1945, two months after the end of the war, footsteps thundered at the door of the Reimold family of teachers in Lörrach. "Ouvrez! Open up, we're looking for weapons and Nazis!"

A French captain with six heavily armed soldiers forced his way into the apartment, and although no weapons were found, he arrested teacher Reimold and dragged him along. From that moment on, there was no trace of him.

The next one was the police master Johann Sprich from Lörrach. In nearby Hattingen, the mechanic Georg Schwarzwälder, the railroad official Karl Graf and the physician Dr. Otto Frey were kidnapped in the same way. In all these actions, a broad-shouldered French captain with a scar on his cheek was the leader.

After a few weeks had passed and the relatives did not hear anything, Mrs. Klara Sprich turned to the French gendarmerie and to her surprise was led to the captain with the scar.

Mrs. Sprich asked him, "Where is my husband?"

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The captain started up and shouted at the stunned woman, "I didn't arrest her husband. If you say you did, I'll have you locked up."

On August 1, 1945, the new German authorities took up the matter. They stopped paying the salaries of the public employees on the grounds: "... because the missing person has not appeared for duty since July 17."

Only after years did the relatives of those who had disappeared without trace manage to interest a courageous lawyer in the case. The lawyer now fearlessly bombarded the German and French authorities. One could no longer wilt and began to investigate.

The captain, who was no longer in Lörrach, had had a German mistress there: the hairdresser Dora Wiedmann. In her apartment at Wiesenweg 28, a house search was carried out by the Surete, and a picture was seized in a bedside drawer: the photograph of Capitaine Andre Huser.

In the course of further investigations, Huser and his deputy at the time, Lieutenant Avril, were arrested and transferred to Freiburg im Breisgau. In 1950, Huser was identified without exception by the women and children as the abductor. The German lawyer alone was not given access to the files. Later, a trial took place that was a pure farce. Even before the verdict, Huser and Avril left the courtroom. Of course, both were acquitted.

But the five missing Germans were never heard from again....

How the French treated the population of their zone at that time is evident from statements made by a mother who, arrested with her 14-year-old son in Zieflensberg near Herrenalb, and verified by the authorities on the

German side:

"During the night of July 10-11, 1945, all the residents of the Zieflensberg district of Herrenalb were arrested by French occupation troops. We had to dress in great haste and go to the barn of our house, where all the other residents were already gathered. In my apartment they searched for weapons, stole everything of value, and loaded all the suitcases and boxes with linen, curtains, valuables, etc. onto trucks and drove them away.

We had to spend day and night standing in the barn; not a word was allowed to be spoken. Whoever dared to do so was immediately slapped in the face by the mostly very spiteful guards. From time to time one of the men was brought in for interrogation. When they were brought back after hours, they were hardly recognizable, their faces blue and red and terribly swollen. The eyes were almost hanging out. To -281-

We didn't get anything to eat, only the children got some hot latte; what was left over, the women were allowed to have.

On July 12, at 11 o'clock at night, I was taken in for questioning. I was addressed only as "Nazi pig" and on a first-name basis. None of my statements was believed. I was accused of having hidden 4 rifles, of hiding my husband, of having his party pistol in my possession, and of having organized a gang of werewolves to stab the French in the back. Any denial of these accusations on my part was met with blows to the face. The blows were so violent that blood shot out of my mouth and nose and I flew from one corner to the other.

When no "confession" could be extracted from me in this way, I was forced to undress completely. When I hesitated to take off my shirt, one of the soldiers tore it off. A large number of Frenchmen were present, officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men, including Major Fuchs, who was the town commander of Herrenalb at the time. I was systematically whipped by two soldiers, starting from the shoulders and going down the whole body. Then they made me kneel on logs and whipped the soles of my feet. During these maltreatments I often felt black before my eyes from the pain, so that I fainted. Each time I was then doused with cold water and, awakened from my fainting spell, pulled up again and pushed to the marked place in the middle of the room. If I swayed as a result of the lashes and left the marked spot, the bystanders repeatedly kicked me back there, insulted me: "You Nazi pig, don't defile me," beat me and dragged me by the hair or legs through the pools of blood to the center of the room and set me up again there. I sustained a major wound on the inside of my left thigh when I flew into the edge of a table. More and more often I collapsed from weakness and thus received the pours of cold water more and more often. "Now we'll show you Nazi pig what the French Gestapo can do," said my tormentors and turned my arms outward so that I lost sight and hearing from the pain. With their burning cigars and cigarettes they burned wounds on my chest and face.

Finally, a young man was brought from among the arrestees, who also had to strip naked and whip me. When he refused to beat a woman, they beat him so excessively that I shouted to him that he should do it, there would be no end otherwise. After many hours (fellow prisoners later told me that it was 5 a.m. when I was brought back), I was ordered to get dressed, and they made fun of my appearance. I was then taken to a neighboring house, which served as a prison for the "werewolf gang," whose "boss" -282- was a "werewolf".

I was supposed to be. I could hear the soldiers taking me away saying to each other that they had not thought it possible that this woman would come out alive, so they had beaten her. I was led into the next room where the relieved guards were sleeping. Unable to stand, I crouched down at the foot of one of the beds where a soldier was sleeping. Nose bone, jaw bone, everything seemed to be broken and caused me terrible pain.

Later, the lieutenant in charge of the interrogation came over to me and asked me if I still didn't want to confess; it would be my turn again in a moment, and if I didn't confess to being the gang leader, he wanted to marry me. I then had to line up in the doorway and stand at attention. From time to time Frenchmen came to visit us. When some senior officers came, they pointed at me, "La voila, c'est la plus dure!" (that's her, she's the most persistent.) I could understand how an officer gave the order to whip me through again and to sprinkle salt or lemon juice into the wounds, then to drive matches under the fingernails and set them on fire, and if this should also be of no use, to rape me. "Then let's see if she doesn't confess!" My ears buzzed and roared, but as soon as I swayed a little I was yelled at to stand still. One of the young men, who had been made to stand day and night with arms raised high, and held in check with rifle butts and kicks, suddenly staggered and fell over, foaming at the mouth. Since a new guard had been posted in the meantime, I had the courage to ask that the boy be put on the bed next door and that a doctor be sent for. The officers who came and carried him were informed whether a priest should not be sent for. At my request, I was allowed to take care of the boy. I was allowed to fetch water and look for a rag. While doing so, an old pair of scissors fell into my hand. Since I had left the torture chamber, only one

thought dominated my mind: "You won't get me naked in front of your eyes again!" When I found the scissors, my decision was made. a moment when the guard walking back and forth could not observe me, I plunged the scissors into my left wrist and hid the wound in the sleeve of the loden coat I was wearing. The wound bled profusely, but I had not hit the wrist, so I kept poking the wound when I was unobserved. Since I still did not succeed in my intention, I wiped my finger over the dirty floor and drilled it into the wound, thus causing blood poisoning.

Soon I was ordered to interrogate again. "Undress!" I undress

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I take off my coat and stand there with smeared arm and wrist. This causes great fright among my tormentors. They offer me a chair, force me to drink a glass of water and then a glass of cognac, and reproach me most vehemently that it is a sin to commit suicide. Whether I had not thought that my totally paralyzed child would have to die if I could no longer take care of him, etc., etc. This sudden outpouring of compassion in no way prevented the gentlemen from having me taken to the prison in Calw (I told the former prison doctor who dressed my wound about the torture I had suffered).

From Calw, after 14 days, I arrived at the Maischbach prisoner-of-war camp. I was the only woman there in the camp, and an old coal bunker had to be cleared for me, in which they put a cot for me. After five days I was sent to Baden-Baden prison, where I was beaten with sticks and kicks and locked in a solitary cell in the cellar, where there was only a stone cot, without a mattress or blanket. For five days I was left there to starve and thirst before I was put in the cell with other women, where I got fleas and lice. After three weeks I was taken with other women to the political internment camp at Maischbach, later to Altschweier and, as the last station of suffering, to Lahr-Dinglingen.

My imprisonment lasted a total of 30 months, from which I was released on December 31, 1947, after a stay of over three months in the Lahr District Hospital on account of severe kidney disease.

This condition still causes me great discomfort very often. Since my teeth were also all knocked loose, I soon lost one tooth after the other and had to have a prosthesis at an early age.

I declare on oath that the above information is true and correct.

Herrenalb, May 5, 1948 Marie Bergmann.

There was hardly a place where the French did not shoot defenseless Germans. The number of victims is endless and will never be able to be determined even approximately. The following were shot, on July 30, 1945 alone: Weertz, Heinrich, hairdresser, Willem (Ostfr.); Drikur, Nikolaus, miner, Kutzdorf, Saar; Horetz, Heinrich, painter, Saarbrücken; Kunkel, Karl, miner, Dudweiler (Saar); Regulski, Eduard, Chrestochiwa (Poland); Omike, Jakob, Steuersekr., Lindscheid (Saar); Arnold, Heinrich, upholsterer, Saarbrücken; Fries, Heinrich, smelter, Saarbrücken, Schmoll, Friedrich, police trainee, Wilhelmshaven; Groß, Fritz, miner, Waldprechtshofen; Weiland, Matthias, miner, Waldprechtshofen; Baron, Heinrich, Scheidt (Saar); Weiß, Peter, police assistant, Kuhbach (Saar); Beeckes, Friedrich, merchant, Ottweiler (Saar).

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Not much fuss was made with the murders. The helpless victims were quickly buried. Only in one case did the French make a mistake. That was in Appenweiler. The French lieutenant Maurice Colette, accompanied by the sergeant Ernest Cousin and the sergeant Louis Devigens, had the teacher Fritz Walter, the pharmacist Walter Zimmermann and Robert Goldmann arrested in Appenweiler and then murdered with shots to the neck. There was no reason for these murders, and no fuss would have been made about them, as in the other towns, if the one murder victim, Robert Goldmann, had not been Jewish. His wife and relatives raised heaven and hell, and in 1956 a trial was held in Paris against Lieutenant Colette and his henchmen. Lieutenant Maurice Colette declared before his judges with unparalleled cynicism: "A Nazi, that counted for little with us, 48 hours later no one thought of it."

But since at least one of the murdered, namely the Jew Goldmann, had not been a "Nazi" and, moreover, the facts had been corroborated by numerous witness statements, the Paris court sentenced Lieutenant Colette to one year's imprisonment, the five subordinates were acquitted "because they had acted on orders". But the Paris court did one more thing: it announced at the end of the sentence that Lieutenant Colette's punishment would at the same time fall under amnesty ...

Hand in hand with the endless murders went the mass rapes of German women and girls by French troops, some

of them by colonial soldiers. Especially in Stuttgart, Bruchsal, Pforzheim, Baden-Baden, on the High Rhine and in the south of Württemberg, conditions prevailed like in the German East at the time of the invasion of the Red Army. the pastoral letter of Archbishop Dr. Groeber of May 8, 1945, it was written: "I myself suffer most painfully from the fact that at present the complaints about looting and attacks on women's honor are piling up in mountains and the tears of the violated women are pouring out in streams

But whoever dared to defend women and girls from the French emergency breeders was doomed to death. In Leonberg near Stuttgart, the merchant Hugo Richter and his 12-year-old daughter threw themselves in front of the wife and mother on whom French soldiers pounced.

The French shot Hugo Richter, not enough with it: also the 12-year-old child.

But not only in their zone of occupation, also in West Berlin the French did not rule differently. Georg Althaus, who had been called up for the Volkssturm toward the end of the war without being deployed, was arrested under dramatic circumstances on August 5, 1945. His apartment building was surrounded by armed Frenchmen at about 2 p.m., the apartment was stormed and everyone, even the children present, had to leave with their hands up.

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standing against the wall while the French searched the house for weapons. Althaus recounts his experiences as follows:

"I myself was taken away handcuffed and delivered to police station 294 in Berlin-Hermsdorf. Here I sat for three weeks. There were no rations, but my family was allowed to bring me some food once a day, which they had starved themselves of on Card 5. Suddenly I no longer had any friends, or their situation was similar.

From here the interrogations were started, we were led by two German police officers to the house in Berlin-Hermsdorf, Kaiserplatz, where the Securite was housed, and interrogated there. I was accused of having killed an American airman who had had to make an emergency landing here in Hermsdorf in 1944.

Upon entering the interrogation room in the apartment at Kaiserplatz 6, one was beaten up with punches and kicks to all accessible parts of his body. The two French officers, Lieutenant Vernet and Lieutenant Bonde, mainly distinguished themselves in the severe maltreatment; a higher-ranking officer who lived in Berlin-Frohnau was also present during one interrogation.

Often I had to strip naked, then an officer stood in front of me with a cocked and unloaded pistol in order to eliminate any resistance from the outset; I only had to raise my hand to defend myself, then there would have been a reason to shoot. In addition to the two officers, there were soldiers of all ranks and two German concentration camp prisoners who had served several years in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and had been placed in preventive detention for serious moral crimes committed on a regular basis. Their names were Riess and Müller. Riess later died of TB in the Rhineland. Müller became a criminal investigator in the East Zone.

While the gun was held in front of my face, my nipples were burned with a lighter. Once a part of my fingernail was torn off, another time I was tied on my back and thrown into a bathtub with ice-cold water and my legs were pulled up so that I almost drowned in it. Again I had to lie down on the table, my legs were tied up and the soles of my feet were smashed with cable wire so that I had hardly a shred of skin left under my feet. It was also popular to have one's hands tied behind one's back, then one was hung from this restraint on the wall so that one's own body weight slowly and very painfully dislocated the shoulder joints. In the meantime the French made their jokes about me and asked me for a confession, firstly whether I had beaten the said American to death, secondly where I had put my valuables -286-

would have buried. For three weeks I kept basically silent about the place where I had buried my works of art, my silver, etc. against bombing. Only when I was threatened that my wife and my daughter Margret would also be arrested and tortured in the same way, did I give in.

When I was also beaten in the abdomen with sticks while hanging on the wall, the pain was increased to indescribable levels. I will not mention the many strokes of the cane and whip on my back, which were part of the daily interrogation tactics.

On August 23, after such an ordeal, I was told that according to the verdict of the court-martial I would be shot at night, it was on the same day that I had revealed my hiding place of family property. First I was given a feudal

evening meal with compote and a glass of dark beer as my last meal, then I was loaded onto a truck and driven to Poloplatz in Berlin-Frohnau, where I was to be shot. Before that, I was driven to Frohnau to Edelhofdamm, where we stood in front of the door for a long time, then drove to Poloplatz. Here I was asked whether I wanted to confess to having killed the American. Again I denied it, for I was not aware of any guilt. That night I was taken to the "Prison de Te-gel", where I was the first German to be brought in with 15 other French prisoners. There I was given a single cell and received 250 g of bread daily, a large cup of coffee in the morning and a bowl of water soup at noon. My weight decreased from about 200 pounds to 120 pounds. Starvation edema made itself felt all the way to my face; when I reached 108 pounds, I was allowed to lie down; by then, like all the other prisoners, I had to have smoothed out the cot and folded it against the wall by the time of the 7 o'clock inspection.

Since I had not had a bowel movement for up to ten days, I asked for a doctor, who came to my cell in the form of a Dr. Henneke, asked me if I had time, then I should sit on my bucket. He did not have any laxatives. When I asked him what I should do with my body swollen up by the water, he answered that I would hardly notice it, the water would rise up to my heart and then it would just be over.

I was now sitting in prison without any further explanation; I had apparently not been registered as a prisoner at all by the French legal department, Major Imbert. During a prison inspection in mid-1946 by General Lancon, he was astonished and promised to take care of me. On July 27, 1946, after two successive interrogations, I was suddenly released. Broken in body and soul, I came to Berlin-Hermsdorf, where I had to learn of the death of my wife Erna and that my house had been confiscated by the French. On 20. 1. 1951 I received the news that the confiscation of my house in Berlin-Hermsdorf, Wil- -287-

helmstr. 11, which I then also moved back into in April 1951. Everything in the inventory had been taken away, not even a cup head was left, even a few inner sashes of the double windows were missing. The junk that was lying around did not belong to me and was also picked up later.

Mr. Trapp, the lawyer, suggested that I sue the French for unlawful pre-trial detention and the maltreatment suffered.

On 26 January 1953 the sentence was passed here, in the barracks "Quartier Napoleon", formerly Hermann-Göring barracks in Berlin-Reinickendorf. As compensation and loss of earnings I received 7334 Marks (Reichsmark) but these were devalued to 1:10, so that I received 733.40 West Marks, for torture suffered (titre de "Pretium Doloris") 1000 West Marks and for the lawyer 500 DM. This judgment covers several pages and is written in French.

Shortly after my release from prison, about 14 days after July 27, 1945, I again received a summons to the Securite in Bondikstrasse in Waidmannslust. Beforehand, I had described my experiences to my friends in my local pub about how I had fared in prison. There, in Bondikstraße, four French officers were again waiting for me, and they immediately started to laugh at me with the words: "You pig, you have insulted the French nation, you have told atrocity stories, now you are going to a place where you will never come back

In my desperation, I came up with a bluff: I explained to the gentlemen that fellow prisoners who had been released for this purpose, Dipl.-Ing. Pinx and others, as well as guard Klaus, from Tegel Prison, police officers Hoffmann and Schulze were witnesses to the maltreatment, and that my lawyer and the Berlin bishop knew exactly that I was here today and would take immediate steps if I did not come home.

That's when they slapped me in the face and said, "Get out, you pig, if you speak one word to anyone, we will find you."

Not only the civilians were treated this way. The "Fortschritt" of August 3, 1951 reported:

"In Annecy-Sacconges (Haute-Savoie, France), German prisoners of war who had surrendered to the partisans in August 1944 were housed in various camps. At the time of their surrender, they had been expressly assured of the protection of the Geneva Convention. On September 2, 1944, forty German POWs were selected and shot on the orders of the camp commander, Capitaine Barrelet de Ricaud. Lieutenant Fabre presided over the execution. Requests to be court-martialed and for reasons to be given were rebuffed. The German POWs were shot in groups of ten in a cruel manner by ten Frenchmen each. Each aimed at his opposite number. Most of them had been killed after the

Salve only wounded and were then killed individually lying on the ground by shots to the head. On the international death forms of the Red Cross, the troop chaplains were not allowed to enter a cause of death. One wrote there later: "accident". The names are available to the editors."

(Testimony: numerous affidavits, including pastor Walter Höchstädter, Diebach near Rothenburg, who accompanied the executed on their last walk)

"At Habere-Lullin (Haute-Savoie, France) on September 2, 1944, the same day as Annecy-Sacconges, forty randomly selected prisoners of war were shot in eight groups of five by Lieutenant Fabre on the orders of the commandant, Capitaine Barreit de Ricaud, as reprisal, and buried in a mass grave without the presence of clergy. The names are available to the editors." (Affidavit of the witness Anton Gottsdialler, Munich).

Kurt-Heinz Deyhle reports on his experiences as follows:

"After imprisonment in Narvik we were shipped to Germany "for release" on July 17, 1945. Instead of "for release" (we had been given our papers in writing) we were sent to the well-known camp Diedersheim near Rüdesheim and handed over to the French. (A book could be written about this horrible mass camp.) We were then sent to the Lake Constance area for a short work assignment.

On 24. 9. 1945 we drove from Markdorf to Constance, once again for "discharge" instead we went to France. Before Donaueschingen, two comrades managed to escape from the moving train. As is well known, all prisoners of war have the right to escape. In response, the French-Alsatian guards randomly pulled two Luftwaffe comrades out of the train car, placed them on the dirt road, raised their MPs and shot them. This happened on 9/24/1945, four and a half months after the end of the war. I guess there were no more war crimes then?"

The American soldiers acted in part no differently. Lippach, district of Aalen (Württemberg), was captured by American tank troops (Negroes) on April 22, 1945, in a battle with an SS unit. After capture, two SS men, Martin Erk from Windsheim near Nuremberg and his comrade Heinz, were placed on the table of a circular saw in the barn of the farmer Ladenburger. However, the circular saw could not be set in motion. The two were then fired upon by the Negroes with submachine guns. Heinz died after a few hours, Erk, who received three shots to the liver, was presumed dead and thrown into the hedge behind the homestead. Both were later found there by a Mrs. Rehbein, who bandaged the wounded man.

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A second case was observed by the church servant Opphold. Six SS men, half undressed with their hands raised, were led by Negro soldiers behind the local churchyard, where they were beaten and shot. (Minutes of the Local Court Ellwangen-Jagst)

Mrs. Emma Wolff from Eschwege states:

"My son, Corporal Heinz Wolff, born 11/23/23, was in retreat to Geismar on the Eichsfeld with scattered remnants of an infantry unit on April 4, 1945. The soldiers were still in uniform, but were no longer in possession of weapons at that time. My son and a comrade, whose personal details could no longer be ascertained, were taken in by the then stationmaster Celbe in Geismar at his house. My son identified himself to Mr. Celbe, since Mr. Celbe knew us. While the two soldiers were in Mr. Celbe's apartment, American troops entered the village. The two unarmed soldiers hid in the cellar of the house. There, on April 4, they were tracked down by American soldiers and locked in a stable belonging to the property. Credible local residents, who had been eyewitnesses to the events described, told me that the following night the German soldiers were bestially maltreated by American soldiers. The term "bestial" was chosen by eyewitnesses who obviously showed consideration for me, the mother of one of the victims. On the morning of April 5, 45, my son and his comrade, who had offered no resistance either during the capture or during the maltreatment and who had already been unarmed before their capture, were shot without any cause and without any trial. It was my only son..."

On July 28, 1945, Mrs. Wilhelmine Möser in Hainbach received a notification from the Protestant parish office in Flierich that her husband, Private Ludwig Möser, had fallen during the last battles in the village of Flierich on the estate "Auf der Horst" on April 9. The widow was puzzled by the priest's sentence: "The American soldiers took his body."

It was not until September 1945 that Mrs. Möser managed to travel to Flierich. There an eyewitness told her that Ludwig Möser and two other German soldiers had hidden in the cellar of the estate "Auf der Horst", apparently with the intention of ending the war for themselves. American soldiers tracked down the hiding men, lined them

up against the wall without trial, and shot them. The bodies lay there for several days before they were taken away by the Americans. The residents secured the identification tags, which they delivered to the parish office. In the Kassel "Sonntagsblatt" on May 31, 1964, the pastor Rose described

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the final events of the war in the village Großen-Ritte: "In the foxhole near the anti-aircraft battery a dead anti-aircraft soldier was found, wounded in the head. He was buried with two flak soldiers who had been captured by Americans in Großen-Ritte, put on the radiator of their car, and shot in the back with machine guns while driving to Hertingshausen."

According to information from the Protestant parish office in Baunatal, those murdered were Corporal Josef Noll from Flörsheim near Aschaffenburg and the sewing machine dealer Altenburg from Hersfeld.

Near Trier, not far from Lampaden, about a dozen men of the Waffen SS surrendered to the Americans and were locked in a stable at Burgheid. After a short captivity, the unarmed men were chased out of the stable again and shot in the back by the Americans as they stepped out. The owner of Burgheid, a Mr. Achter, buried the murdered men at his castle for the time being.

Near Burgheid, a mass of prisoners of war, whose numbers could not be determined, was shot by the Americans. The bodies of these murdered were taken away by the Americans in trucks. On May 1, 1945, the Americans captured the shoe shop owner Michael Kronbeck in Dingolfing, drove him into a park in the town and shot him in the back.

The Paderborn prosecutor's office stated about the discovery of thirteen bodies of former German soldiers in April 1945: "The investigation has shown that the thirteen German soldiers found at Teufelsberg were shot by members of the American armed forces."

Especially in the Bavarian region, hundreds of German soldiers are buried who were verifiably murdered by members of the American army. At some of these mass graves, such as the one in Oberpfammern, solemn commemoration ceremonies are held every year for these victims of American war criminals who perished so terribly.

On May 1, 1945, this small Upper Bavarian village of Oberpfammern became documentary proof of the mendacity of the claim that the Germans alone had committed war crimes. The retired Protestant pastor D. Wilhelm Feldner describes this event in a factual report with shattering forcefulness:

"Pfammern is also drawn into the tragedy. As in a well-constructed drama, the main theme is modified in a minor subplot. The rumble of the guns comes closer and closer, between the village and the forest an airplane goes down. The units that are still there clear the place, some men slip into the mimicry of the villager, put on work clothes and go to the field with some equipment. But still

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stragglers arrive on the enemy road, the last one being a Landser on a white horse. He is looking for his unit, but he is so exhausted that he can't go any further. The master baker pulls him into his house and feeds him, then offers him civilian clothes and implores him to leave secretly. In vain, the man - he is from Vienna - does not want to leave his unit and his mold in the lurch.

Before he can swing himself back into the saddle, the first tanks roll up and confront him. And now a scene of Shakespearean demony develops, only that here death directs and gives the cue. The Americans have found a flag of the declining empire in the village. It is doused with gasoline and set on fire, and the prisoner must stamp out the flames with his feet. As a reward he is given a cigarette, then he is led to the meadow behind the farm - one shot, and the white horse waits in vain for its rider.

In the meantime, more prisoners have gathered, among them three gendarmerie officers from neighboring Glonn, who had been brought in on a tour of duty. They are standing in the courtyard of the "Alter Wirt", their hands above their heads, their faces against the wall of the Austragshaus.

The weather is rough, it had snowed during the night. The snow is gone, but the air is still sharp. The men are shivering, they are hungry and thirsty, but no one is allowed to hand them anything, nor are they allowed to speak. The sergeant, who is in charge, sits somewhere and drinks.

Finally, as evening approaches, he appears and has seven spades requisitioned in the village. When these are put into the hands of the prisoners, they know what is in store for them. A seventeen year old calls out desperately if

no one wants to stand up for them, but the sergeant, who speaks good German, will not listen. Escorted by the guard, the seven march with their spades through the empty village street to the edge of the village. They are ordered to stop in front of the next field. It is a blessed piece of German land on which they are standing, the meadows are already green, the seeds are beginning to sprout. In the distance the mountains rise, the peaks are still covered with snow, on the right the St. Andrew's cross shines from the dome of the church. There the Seven do their last work. Only hesitantly do the spades dig into the soft earth. Then a few shots that echo through the whole village and make the people freeze in horror, and the tragedy is over; the Seven lie shot in their blood, without judgment or sentence. As dawn breaks, the population is driven past the dead into the forest." -

Franz Euskirchen, a returnee, discovered a lonely soldier's grave in the cemetery in Offenhausen near Hersbruck and was finally able to identify one of the three soldiers lying there, even with difficulty, on the basis of an identification tag that could be found. "Villagers confirmed to me that in the-

In his poignant report, Franz Euskirchen wrote: "In the grave of three young SS men who were shot on the hill at the edge of the forest by American soldiers of an armored unit after they had already spent a day and a night in captivity, they were shot without trial.

On August 23, 1956, the "Regensburger Woche" reported that an American mass murder had taken place in Eberstetten in the district of Pfaffenhofen an der Um, and published the statements of witnesses to the crime:

"The master carpenter Georg Walter was at home in his property when on Saturday, April 28, 1945, at about 2 p.m., the Americans entered Eberstetten with jeeps and armored cars. They stopped briefly in front of each house until a white flag was hoisted. Master carpenter Walter also had a white linen cloth hanging out the window. Together with a mechanic staying in his house, he watched the movement of the US soldiers from the attic. Suddenly they noticed jeeps and tanks with German prisoners sitting on them being driven out to the site by white Americans. The vehicles stopped about a hundred yards from the Waker estate.

Master carpenter Walter describes: "The Americans demanded by gestures that the prisoners get off the vehicles and walk to the left into a meadow where there was a pit hole from a German radio car parked there. As the prisoners marched almost side by side in the meadow toward the pit, they were shot from behind at a distance of about 50 yards by about three or four white Americans with rifles and pistols. Among those shot was a wounded man who had come to Eberstetten in the morning and was waiting to be taken away by an ambulance.

This soldier, a man of about forty, was obviously injured in the foot, for he limped on one foot and had to be supported by comrades on the left and right as he walked into the meadow. The mechanic watching the incident said to me, "See, that's the way to deal with Germans!"

Shortly after, another jeep came back, on which three German prisoners of war were sitting next to white Americans. The Americans stopped at the same spot, looked around the area, and then ordered the prisoners by gestures to go to the right into the meadow. When the three defenseless men ran radially into the designated meadow, they, too, were shot from behind. During these two shootings I had seen without a doubt that none of the prisoners resisted the Americans. After the shootings the dead had been left lying!" The former mayor Josef Sebald confirmed at the Landpolizei-

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Station Pfaffenhofen these horrific events and stated among other things:

"All the dead were lying on their stomachs. They had been shot from behind, as I saw for myself."

In a letter to the tracing service of the Bavarian HIAG, the acting mayor of Eberstetten, Walter, confirmed the course of this mass murder on November 24, 1959, and concludes: "Why the soldiers were shot and not taken away as prisoners is not known. Perhaps because they were all in the Waffen-SS? They were shot by the tank troops of the Americans who entered Eberstetten."

Mrs. Hemmrich, Passau, stayed with her seventeen-year-old son in April in Traßheim near Ruderting, about 15 km from Passau. On May 1, 1945, American troops appeared and called in seventeen-year-old Fritz Hemmrich for minor service. Hemmrich had been discharged from labor service on March 28 and had volunteered for the Waffen SS, but was not drafted in view of the end of the war. In the evening, the Americans appeared again and ordered the boy to come along. It was assumed by both the mother and the villagers, especially the Liebel family, that the Americans would take him back for labor duty. After two days, villagers found him in the cellar of the farmer Bessinger. The Americans had brought the lad here and shot him. From his shirt sleeves, which were pulled up, it could still be determined on the corpse that the Americans had searched for the blood group, albeit

in vain. Just as they shot Fritz, twenty-seven-year-old Alois Kaufer happened to walk past the Bessinger house. He was immediately arrested by the Americans, also dragged into the cellar and shot there. The two unfortunate victims of American bestiality were lying on top of each other when the farmers found the bodies.

On April 8, 1956, in a commemorative article on the return of the occupation of the town by American troops, the "Kitzinger Zeitung" described the conditions that prevailed in Germany at that time as follows:

"Three days earlier, U.S. troops occupied the town without a fight, after 6 weeks earlier, on the ominous February 23, 1945, at noon, British-American bomb squadrons destroyed 60% of the downtown area in two rolling raids, killing over 600 residents, including a large number of kindergarten children.

The city is as if deserted. Hardly anyone can be seen hurrying along the streets that have been preserved. Government offices and schools are closed. The Americans have set up shop in the German barracks on the anti-aircraft and airfield grounds, which have remained significantly intact, and have also confiscated numerous undestroyed private homes.

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There, around noon, on the Turngemeindeplatz in the west of the city, where otherwise cheerful, vigorous German youth cavorts, the following happens:

A U.S. officer enters the youth hostel there and demands, as in the surrounding houses, that the windows and shutters be closed immediately, the window curtains lowered everywhere. No one is allowed to stay outside. Strictest order! Otherwise - a hand movement to the pistol pocket....

But if you nevertheless peek out stealthily through a crack, you can observe the following: There, where the cinder track on the square reaches out to the northeast, underneath the simple memorial, erected by the Kitzingen gymnastics community, which has always been patriotically conscious of its gymnasts who died in 1914/18, U.S. soldiers drive in a high pole. No sooner have they finished doing this than others with rifles ready to fire bring a civilian, about 40 to 45 years old, plain suit, green loden hat with chamois beard on it, bound, and tie him to the pole. A line of U.S. soldiers steps forward, an officer appears, dead silence, then barks: Fire!

The salvo cracked, the fatally shot man collapsed. He is hastily loaded onto a military truck and off he goes, unknown where to ...".

In Freising, the merchant Josef Biesendorfer was denounced, beaten up by the Americans with rifle butts, finally dragged onto a jeep and driven into the nearby Isar meadows. There they let him go and shot him "on the run". His body also showed several knife wounds.

The same happened to the foreman Johann Hobmaier, who was also maltreated by the Americans and driven into a forest 5 kilometers away. It was not until 17 days later that his body was found, battered beyond recognition. It was obvious that the skin had been removed from the unfortunate man's hands.

On the 1. time in Moosbach near Grafing Albert Georg Schörner, born on 22.7. 1899, was shot in the forest without any reason. The Moosach citizen Anton Kronester found the body and brought it back to the village.

In Waldbach, district of Öhringen, the farmer's wife Frieda Gurr was shot in the orchard next to her children by an American soldier. Allegedly, the children had made derogatory remarks among themselves about two German "Veronikas" who were in the company of the Americans.

The teacher Buhr in Prezier/Lüchow was arrested by four Americans on April 19, 1945 and led out a dirt road. Soon after, villagers heard three shots. The next morning they found teacher Buhr lying dead on the dirt road. Only through the intercession of the mayor was his wife allowed to see him again.

In Uschlag the women Sophie Witzel, née Dümer, and Mrs. -295-

Anna Dümer, née Reuter, was shot by the Americans in a bunker where the women were seeking refuge with their children. Ten-year-old Karl-Heinz Dümer suffered severe injuries, leaving him with a stiff arm.

In Sandershausen the quarry owner Haase and in Heiligenrode Mr. Mühlhausen with other Dorr inhabitants were shot by Americans.

In the Lower Bavarian district of Pfarrkirchen, Josef Eiben from Simbach (Inn), Josef Hofbauer from Hirschbach were arrested in May 1945 and interned for the time being in the camp at the Pfarrkirchen racetrack. As reported in the "Westfalenzeitung" of April 26, 1955, Hofbauer's body was later discovered buried in the woods. A few meters next to it, the soldier Franz Kun from Eisenstein was found buried. Eiben was shot by an American officer Oppenheimer behind the racecourse grandstands, Hofbauer was murdered by an American officer named Loid in the forest near Pfarrkirchen. The wife of Dr. Rostock, who had taken his own life, also disappeared

without a trace. She had been brought in by the CIC for questioning, from which she never returned.

In Eggstätt near Endorf in the district of Rosenheim, there was a number of bomber evacuees on the state estate there at the end of the war. Nearby was a camp with captured Russians. The war was over; everywhere German soldiers without bombs tried to get home. Exhausted, a number of such men were also camped on the estate, among them two seventeen-year-old members of the Waffen SS.

Suddenly a group of Americans appeared and tried to arrest the denounced administrator of the state property. In the process, the scattered unarmed German soldiers fell into their hands.

A witness, Mrs. M. Thallmeier, who was among the evacuees with her child, states:

"We of the civilian population had to line up along the wall while the Americans searched the German soldiers. None of them had a weapon. Finally, the American chief chose the two young SS men, and they had to dig two burial holes in front of us. The two boys, half children, were so excited that they could hardly hold the shovels. I can remember exactly that one was digging a square hole, the other a round one. Finally, this took too long for the Americans, and they miserably shot up the two youths with their submachine guns. Despite the fact that the two were hit by countless shots ~ one's chin was shattered, he could no longer speak - and were bleeding from numerous wounds, they were not dead. They kept screaming, "Mother! Mother!"

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The Americans forbade us to stand by the boys, and only when they were called away again did we dare to help them as best we could. We women bandaged them up, and finally they could even be taken to the hospital in Seebruck. However, the help came too late. They both died the same night."

At Atenau, German soldiers in prepared positions awaited the advancing Americans, who immediately shouted loudly for the Germans to surrender, since the war would be lost anyway. In fact, the German soldiers, realizing the hopelessness of their situation, threw away their weapons and surrendered. As soon as the Americans saw that the Germans had thrown away their weapons, they opened fire on the defenseless Germans and shot them all up. Only one of the soldiers, named Paus from Oberndorf near Röhrbach, was able to hide under the body of a sergeant until the Americans left. He was the only one to remain alive.

In Oberndorf, the American soldiers checked the papers of passers-by on the road, including those of a farmer named Stadler from Wotz-mannsreut. They told him it was o. k., he could go on. When he was about ten meters away from the Americans, they shot him from behind. He was killed instantly. Today, on the road where Stadler was murdered by the Americans, there is still a cross in memory of this sad "heroic deed"!

The Americans moved into Kreuzberg on April 25, 1945, coming from Hohenau. On the basis of a denunciation, they arrested the farmer Josef Atzinger and imprisoned him together with the teacher in the cellar of the schoolhouse. A short time later, Atzinger, who was an ordinary member of the civilian SS, was led out by the Americans and shot in the sand pit below Kreuzberg.

The mayor Karl Bottier from Tittling near Passau was arrested by the Americans on April 29, 1945 and taken to a field barn in Siebenhasen. There he was first beaten so badly that he could be heard screaming from afar, and then shot the next day. Bottier's body was thrown out into the field where, unbeknownst to the family, he had been lying in the field for over ten days, only 200 yards from the estate. The wife and four children, aged six to twelve, were not allowed to leave the house for eight days. Only on the fourteenth day did the Americans give permission to bury the body.

In Hengersberg, the mayor and local farmer leader Bruck-müller was shot by the Americans when they marched in, together with his wife and two school-age children. A butcher's boy belonging to the master butcher Angerer from Hengersberg, who had just been working in Bruckmüller's stables on a

pig was slaughtered, was also shot on the spot as a troublesome witness.

Near Schwäbisch-Hall in April 1945, a platoon of the reconnaissance division (mot.) of the division of the Waffen-SS Nord was surprised by the advancing Americans while in a resting position, so that it could no longer defend itself. All members of the platoon, among them platoon leader Wilhelm Brunke, were ruthlessly shot up, although they were already unarmed. Only through a surviving soldier, Josef Heinold, did the relatives later learn of the massacre.

The Lutheran parish bulletin of the parish of Orlach-Jungholzhausen, Schwäbisch-Hall district, has recorded a number of these strange re-education methods. We take from the records the following harrowing accounts:

" ... first of those who died in our communities in April 1945:

In chapter IX of this chronicle I told that the Americans shot three captured German soldiers in the "Arresthäusle" at the Feuersee in Orlach. This happened on April 16, 1945. I was not allowed to find out the names of the dead. In any case, the three were taken away by the Americans to Bensheim-Auerbach on the Bergstraße and buried there in the military cemetery...

In Jungholzhausen, where there was still fierce fighting on April 15, 1945, I noted over 25 names of German soldiers, some of whom were killed in action and some of whom were shot while in captivity ... "

On the day the Americans marched into Rosenheim, it was May 2 or 3, SS-Sturmmann Franz Sigl was staying with a family friend at Innstrasse 61 in Rosenheim. As a convalescent, he was still a patient at the Rosenheim reserve hospital and was in uniform. On the advice of the Mayer family, Sigl hid in the cellar when the Americans arrived. However, they found Sigl, placed him against the wall of the house and shot him. His body had to remain on the spot for days and was not allowed to be buried for the time being. Today he has found his final resting place in Rosenheim's Heldenfriedhof.

In Roggenstein, district of Vohenstrauß, in the Upper Palatinate, there was neither a defense post nor a single German soldier. The Americans who moved in therefore turned with the greatest interest to the brewery of the mayor Anton Wolf and demanded schnapps and other alcoholic beverages. When he was reluctant to comply, probably fearing the consequences, the Americans beat up Anton Wolf, pushed him out of his homestead and drove him down a steep slope. He was then summarily shot on the other side of the slope. Later, Anton Wolf's body was found by his -298

relatives recovered and buried together with a seventeen-year-old Waffen SS soldier whom the Americans had caught unarmed on the march back home and shot.

How often the German soldiers were accused of repeatedly shooting prisoners "on the run" when they wanted to get rid of them. The following case shows how the American troops handled this:

On May 5, 1945, American advance detachments occupied the city of Passau and the surrounding area without a fight. From here they drove in a truck to Erlau, where, as everywhere, they called on all German soldiers present, even those who had long since mustered out, to report. Among those who reported was the agricultural worker Otto Lauterbach, who had been wounded by a bullet in the arm as an infantryman in the German Wehrmacht and had received eight days' home leave from the military hospital as a private at the end of April. He reported to the schoolhouse and was loaded onto a truck with numerous comrades. Allegedly they were to be taken to the Tittling camp. No one can say whether the Americans got lost, but in any case the transport arrived in the area of Wegscheid in the Bavarian Forest. Thereupon a great unrest arose among the prisoners, and especially Private Lauterbach, who knew the Russians from the Eastern Front, said to his comrades that he never wanted to come into Soviet captivity. The journey was visibly moving more and more in the direction of the demarcation line.

Otto Lauterbach jumped from the vehicle at a suitable opportunity, but immediately realized that he had miscalculated and that escape was hopeless. He ran back to the vehicle with his hands up and asked the Americans to let him get back on. The transport had stopped immediately. One of the American guards raised his machine pistol and shot Otto Lauterbach, who was standing close in front of him, full in the face.

It was not until the end of May that Lauterbach was found by chance by the merchant Braunauer from Wegscheid. This road, which the transport had taken, was not used at that time. Since the body was already badly decomposed, it was only possible to determine from the uniform that it was a German. He was buried in the cemetery in Wegscheid, and only when his comrades were released from the Tittling camp did the unfortunate mother, who had already had four sons killed in the German Wehrmacht, learn that the fifth had now been shot "on the run".

In Veitsbronn, Fürth County, on April 17, 1945, captured German soldiers marched in three columns on the road from Langenzenn to Farmbach Castle. They had to march with their hands raised above their heads- -299-

ren. At the end of one of these columns marched two prisoners who had obviously been separated out earlier.

Mrs. Renz in Bernbach reports that near the village of Bernbach two Americans led the two prisoners up the embankment part of the way between Bernbach and the railroad crossing to a sand pit. Shots were heard shortly thereafter, and the Americans returned alone. Since a total curfew had been imposed immediately after the American invasion with the threat of shooting, no one dared to look after the two unfortunates. Only after four days did the locals dare to go to the sand pit, where they found the two young soldiers dead. One of the two still had a bandage packet in his outstretched hand. Probably he wanted to bandage himself and died over it. The

other, dying, had scribbled an address on a piece of paper. It read: Friedrich Rohe, Neheim-Hüsten, Rohrstraße 3. Identification tags, identity papers and photos had been taken from the dead beforehand by their murderers. On the basis of this poignant death notice, it was later possible to identify at least one of them. It was the Waffen-SS gunner Ewald Rohe, born on August 4, 1927, who had been drafted into the Freimann barracks in Munich only in February 1945 and had to bleed to death here. Before he died, he wrote down his father's address so that his relatives could be notified.

In the village of Kleinweil, Post Großweil, two German soldiers were captured on April 30, 1945; one of them was named Horst Liebig, born in Breslau on August 23, 1923. He was not with the Waffen SS, but with the German Navy.

The Kleinweil local government reported on the fate of these two German soldiers on February 27, 1960:

"Both soldiers were shot by the American troops at a house wall. The same were immediately dead and had to be buried at the roadside of the municipal ground, route Kleinweil-Großweil. They were not allowed to be buried in the cemetery at that time. The graves were marked with simple wooden crosses, and the grave mounds always bore fresh flowers, provided by residents.

On Wednesday, December 13, 1950, both bodies were exhumed and moved to the military cemetery by order of the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior. Ministry of the Interior and buried there with dignity."

On April 26, 1955, the "Eichstätter Volkszeitung" published a commemorative article on page 5 under the title "Meilenhofen and Zell ten years ago." The paper described the events as follows:

"On April 25, American troops entered our two villages, coming from the direction of Biesenhard. After shortly before a

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German unit had still offered futile resistance from Zell, enemy artillery opened fire on the village of Zell from the direction of Haselberg during the course of the day on April 25. Numerous shells hit the area of the village. The barns of the farmers Peter Eberle, Josef Lehmeier and Michael Grubmann were set on fire. The whole homestead, mill, dwelling house, stable and barn of the mill owner and farmer Johann Meilinger went up in flames. The barns of the farmers Josef Göbl and Josef Böhm (at that time Therese Heindl) in Meilenhofen were also destroyed by fire. When the German unit had withdrawn and the fire was temporarily hurried, a resident went to meet the American troops with a white flag. As a result, the village of Zell was spared further destruction.

The Sehnfarter mill was also shelled by American troops. After Mrs. Vogel and her son went to meet the American troops coming from Bergen with a white flag, the wasteland was also spared from destruction.

Near the village of Zell, about twenty German soldiers who fell at that time are buried in the Heroes' Cemetery."

Paul Hassold, a clerk in Weissenburg, who witnessed the overrun by the Americans in Zell a. d. Speck, gives the following account:

"This small place was defended by light flak. After the flak unit ran out of infantry protection, eighteen men surrendered to the Americans. These eighteen men were shot by the Americans after capture, some with their hands raised, or arms crossed over their heads. These soldiers died by shot in the neck by the Americans. In conversations with officers of this unit, the same stated that they regretted the occurrence. One sergeant stated, "Were themselves red SS (Flak had red mirrors), will be shot by us all !"

The unit is unknown, the code name must have been "Tango fwd", because several signs with this inscription marked the way to this US unit. The priest of Zell, who buried these flak soldiers, will be able to confirm that they bore bullet wounds in the neck and that the neck was burned and swollen; the shots were fired from very close range, as is known from accounts of the deeds of Russian NKVD commissars."

Peter Gebhardt, owner of the Wifling brewery near Erding, had slapped a French prisoner of war who had become insolent. When the Americans marched in, the Frenchman denounced the brewery owner. The Americans took Peter Gebhardt from the cellar of the brewery at gunpoint, forced him onto the prow of a tank and drove off in the direction of St. Koloman. There they pushed Peter Gebhardt off the pan- -301-

zer, drove him into the forest and shot him. It was not until the next day that the Americans allowed the women to retrieve the dead man at dawn. Peter Gebhardt found his final resting place in the cemetery in Wifling.

On September 17, 1951, the "Straubinger Tageblatt" published an extensive report on the Allied war crimes from the pen of its employee Dr. R. S. under the headline "The Vilshofen civil murders are being rolled up".

However, not only in the judiciary are those Allied war criminals beyond the reach of justice, even the so-called institutes of public opinion, above all radio, press, television, conceal and cover up from the German people the incontrovertible fact that during the war war crimes were committed by all armies, not only by the German ones.

Only a few small local newspapers were brave enough to record the bloody facts and write the truth. Among them was the "Straubinger Tageblatt". It wrote:

"As we reported in the last number of our newspaper, member of the state parliament Alfons Gaßner recently filed a complaint with the public prosecutor's office in Passau regarding the arbitrary shooting of citizens of Vilshofen on May 9 and 10, 1945. The public prosecutor's office has accepted this complaint. At present, officials of the criminal investigation department in Griesbach are trying to shed light on the five murders. Although the executions of the five Vilshofen citizens were committed by American soldiers as arbitrary crimes by individuals, rumor claims that Vilshofen residents were also complicit in the citizen murders as instigators and denounciators. In addition, some men are likely to be brought before the judge for desecration of corpses.

The investigations by the criminal police initially proved to be extremely difficult, since the relatives of the murdered persons preferred to leave the whole affair to the past and since they did not want to bear any grudges against the Germans who were partly responsible, whom they themselves hardly knew or only presumably knew. Light into the darkness could only come with certainty if the two murderers - a former concentration camp guard, Henry Robert, and the former American military policeman Jackson, called Jacks, were questioned by the American police as happened recently in a case in Italy, where Italy then even demanded the extradition of the two murderers. Even if the Americans were expected as liberators in Lower Bavaria in 1945, no incident in Lower Bavaria has caused greater disappointment than the Vilshofen citizen murders and has damaged the reputation of the American people more. Therefore, it is also to be welcomed if the occupying power cooperates in the uncovering of the crimes and supports the work of the public prosecutor's office - 302-.

supports. Even the governor at that time, Colonel Mannik, distanced himself from the atrocities in the name of the military government and declared his regret about the shootings as arbitrary crimes of an individual. A combat group had arrived that day, and at night two soldiers forced their way into the apartment of the 75-year-old merchant Franz Danzer. They pushed in the locked door, took the man out and demanded wine, schnapps and "Fräuleins" from him. It should be expressly stated here that these were not Negro soldiers. Danzer declared that he had not, that they were wrong. Thereupon they hurled Danzer to the ground, threw themselves on him and beat him terribly. Again and again they demanded, "where are your four sons, where is your son Wolf, who was in the SS." This claim was not true. Wolf was merely in an SS hospital. One of the sons was exceptionally staying with his father in his apartment that very night, while the other children were staying with their mother at her relatives. When the Americans kept asking for wine, the boy ran away across the yard to ask for a bottle of wine from a railroad family. Meanwhile, he heard his father calling pathetically for help. When the son returned, the two soldiers let go of the half-beaten man. They had smashed the top of his skull and shattered his artery, as the coroner found out, so that he was bleeding internally.

The son lifted him onto a sofa. Before the Americans left, they gave him one more blow with their fists. "Thank God that Mama wasn't there," moaned the dying man. He could no longer contain himself.

"What was that? Gell, they were Russians," he said, because dying he did not think that they were Americans, well Danzer had placed many hopes on the liberation by the Americans.

From the spiritual side it was confirmed to us, and also his wife had to admit it to us, that Danzer, a brave Catholic, had always regretted that he had not been allowed to go to the missions and that he often expressed the wish to die as a martyr. Several times he had declared that he would give his life for Schedlbauer (who was to be the next victim) to depart from this world in peace with God.

The indignation of the population had not yet subsided when the Schedlbauer case became known on the 8th time. Hans Schedlbauer was the only minor party figure among all the murdered citizens. He was an adjutant in an SA storm.

One of his eyes was hanging out, his bloodshot head was swollen to the size of a bucket, and the aged man was unrecognizable. So he was driven through the city on the pillion of a motorcycle.

A similar ordeal was experienced on May 9 by Hans Helling, owner of a well-known drugstore and fruit juice factory, who lived in the post office building at the train station - 303-.

te. This honest, upright citizen was also driven through the city, tied up on the radiator of a jeep. The 55 year old district customs commissioner Hans Schlöger was arrested in his apartment, where his wife bravely defended him. In the process, she knocked the gold watch out of the Yank's hand, for example, which fortunately fell into her apron pocket. He was driven into the district office with his hands up, pistol barrels in his back, and locked in a room there. The arrests had been made by the American military policeman Jacks and the former concentration camp guard Henry Robert.

Next came the now 53-year-old tax inspector Josef Schlager, the only survivor of the murder. He tells us how he had just heard on May 9 in the evening around 6:30 p.m. that his friend Helling had been arrested. On his way into town (he lived at Stadtplatz 15 at the time) he saw his cook accompanied by an MP man and a civilian, namely Jacks and Henry Robert, walking up the Vilsvorstadt. At gunpoint, they arrested him, snatched his briefcase from him, and, with blows and boxing blows, drove him into his apartment, which they then ransacked and looted. Schlager was forced to put on some uniform clothes. Then, like his other companions in death, he was driven through the city to the district administration office. As they approached the Stadtluchtspielen, they stopped in front of Kapuzinerstraße 30.

Under the pretext that they had to search Mielach's apartment for hidden weapons, Jacks and Robert entered the apartment and arrested the tax inspector Ludwig Mielach. With both of them they then went to the district office, where the other death candidates, Hans Schedlbauer, Hans Helling, Hans Schlöger and a German soldier, had already been rounded up, Josef Schlager tells us. At this moment, the 53 year old, with his clever and penetrating gaze, lost his voice. In front of him appears the gruesome sight of Schedlbauer, who could no longer stand. Either his brain was injured or he was wounded with bayonet stabs. To make us experience true concentration camp agonies, the former concentration camp guard Henry Robert then called to us in the room that we would all be shot. No one could imagine why this punishment should befall us, since we had nothing to show for it," Mr. Schlager continued.

It was perhaps around 9 o'clock in the evening when we six prisoners were driven away in an American truck. Schedlbauer had to be lifted onto the truck. The trip went to Osterhofen, and before Pleinting the truck suddenly stopped. Schedlbauer was taken to the nearby forest beyond the railroad track.

I listened to the eight shots in a row that Schedlbauer fired from his

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torment. When Jackson and Robert returned alone, the journey continued to Osterhofen.

In Osterhofen, more than 50 former French prisoners of war were quartered in the Moosersaal. Jacks and Robert locked the five of us, Mielach, Schlöger, Helling, the German soldier and me, in the next room. Repeatedly the French pushed open the door and mockingly told us that we would be broken tomorrow, and plundered us completely. Almost with a little joy our eyewitness reports that he had to sacrifice his boots and received large lace-up shoes in exchange, which facilitated his escape afterwards. Instead of suspenders and belts we received thick knickknacks. Perhaps with the ulterior intention that we would hang ourselves with the ropes in view of the threatened shooting. Physically and emotionally broken, we lay on the floor in silence. We were not allowed to talk to each other. The next day, May 10, I had to sweep out the quarters of the French prisoners of war. In the process, I received a hail of blows with a heavy batten. Already during the night I had taken up the idea of escape. I was only waiting for a suitable opportunity.

While the German soldier stayed behind in Osterhofen - what became of him I do not know - the four of us, Mielach, Schlöger, Helling and I - were driven to Plattling in an American truck. Henry Robert was no longer with us. The truck stopped three times on the way. Jacks, who was guarding us, had us dismounted, "to be shot," as he sneeringly said. Again and again, however, his plan was thwarted, because each time people passed by. That alone proved that this was a murder, not an actual execution, or Jacks would not have been afraid of witnesses. Three times we braced ourselves for death, and three times we had to get back in. Shortly before Plattling, the truck turned around and drove back to Pleinting. When we got out again - near the place where they had killed Schedlbauer the day before - the truck drove away. Jacks drove us as guards in the direction of Vilshofen.

When another American truck came, Jacks stopped it, negotiated with the driver and his three companions, three American soldiers. Then we had to get on, and the trip continued through Vilshofen and through Sandbach. Where the road continued to the left over the railroad to Passau, we turned right up the hill toward Fürstenzell and into the forest. Near the tank barrier before Jägerwirth we had to dismount. Two were placed on the left and

two on the right of the wagon.

I stood to the left of the car with Helling, Schlöger and Mielach were guarded by a young boy on the other side. Then Jacks grabbed me by the collar and put me behind Helling. He probably wanted to kill us with one shot. At that moment, I kicked the tree-length guy in the -305-

the belly or against the shin - I can't remember exactly, that's how quickly everything happened. In no time at all, I had thrown off the two much too large lace-up shoes from my feet and was running and running. The thick trees in the dense high forest offered me cover. I shot back and forth in zigzags. The bullets slapped against the tree trunks. The American ran after me. But suddenly the forest was over, a meadow lay in front of me, which could not give me any cover. I saw the American about 15 meters behind me. Although I kept running in a zigzag, a shot hit me on my left forearm. My breath was gone when I happily arrived in front of the farmhouse, the Forster estate. But unfortunately the house was locked. Through a gap in the boards I slipped into the threshing floor and hid in an oat chest. I put my elbow between the lid and the chest to be able to breathe and at the same time to hear approaching footsteps. But the blood was pounding in my veins so that I could hardly hear anything. I couldn't even hear the shots that knocked down my three innocent companions in the forest.

So I lay for an hour or two in the oat hut. When finally no Americans showed themselves and I had recovered somewhat, I got out of my hiding place and went back - which I cannot understand myself today - to the scene of the shooting. To the right of the road lay the bodies of Helling and Mielach on top of each other; they had been hit by many shots. I did not see the body of Schlöger at first. But he was lying about 50 meters to the side, also in his blood, pierced by several shots. I assume that he, like me, seized the opportunity and fled, but in doing so he was struck down by a murderous bullet. I put my hands together and prayed the first Our Father for my dead comrades, thanking Heaven for the great good fortune that I had been saved. One of the dead had been shot through the head from behind, so that the right eye was hanging out. In the other, the brain matter had oozed out."

When our eyewitness had reported so far, a pause of silence occurred, which was devoted to the tragedy of the dead and the happiness of the survivor. Schlager further reports that he then hid in a deep thicket of the forest; later he learned that four Americans came in a jeep and searched the forest. He was wandering around in the woods for several days and hid with acquaintances near Igelbach. His daughter had tried to secure his release immediately after his arrest. When she finally succeeded in obtaining a written confirmation from the military government that there was not the slightest evidence against him, that he could calmly return to Vilshofen, he returned home after nine days.

"Of the dead, all I can say is they were the best people I've

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in my life," Mr. Schlager told us. "What pains me most is that the three dead men do not even know why they were shot. My wish would be that I could catch one of those fellows once without witnesses."

In this way, our eyewitness expressed the hope of all those for whom justice is a matter of the heart. It is an honorable task for all to help that justice is done to the dead and that the murderers and accomplices suffer the just punishment, so that these crimes are also atoned for. It is a gratifying sign that order and a sense of justice are returning, for innocent people have been murdered here. Even if they had been guilty, nothing could justify such an execution, for in a state governed by law and culture, justice must pronounce its verdict, and only the court may take a man's life. And just as the corpses, for whom a simple grave had first been prepared in the Jägerwirth forest of the dead, were buried in the Vilshofen cemetery in their day, so the civil murders should today come to the right place, before the judge.

Speaking to the widows of the murdered and the sole survivor, it is beyond all doubt that concentration camp guard Henry Robert, who is said to have been a Swiss, and MP soldier Jackson must have had lists of the murdered.

How else would it be possible that they knew the exact addresses of the six dead men, could arrest them in their homes or even off the street? Rumors have it that Jacks carried a list with him during the arrests. Henry Robert now lives in America, where he peddles medical instruments. Jacks lives in the house of the umbrella store Knödl on Luitpoldplatz, and his full name is probably known there. The investigation would be greatly facilitated and expedited if the two main perpetrators could be questioned; however, this would require the help of the occupation forces.

The well-known healer H. H. Pfarrer Alois Bieringer, with whom Henry Robert was treated, told us that the alleged Jacks, according to Henry Robert, had been a student of journalism in Boston. As a reason for shooting Schedlbauer, Robert stated that Schedlbauer had severely mistreated Poles and other prisoners of war. Hans Helling had been killed only because he had been the commander of the Volkssturm. The claim that Jacks had gone to communion with him every day was described by Father Bieringer as an outright hoax.

Shortly after the initial medical treatment, Jacks was brought to him by an American sergeant major for further treatment. This time, however, he was without his weapons and belt. When Bieringer asked why they

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were two, the American sergeant-major stated that "Jacks had already been tried by a court-martial in Linz and was under guard."

"After about three weeks," Father Bieringer went on to explain, "the Sergeant Major appeared at the request of patient Jacks and told me that Jacks had been tried again (in Salzburg?) by a high American court in this matter, but had been acquitted because the shooting of Schedlbauer and Helling still fell under court martial, the warlike actions against Bavaria having not yet been completed.

I noticed, however, that during the further and last demonstration of Jacks, he was still weaponless and copeless. After Jacks, about 22 to 23 years old, could not speak German. Interpellated the American sergeant that Jacks would be released in shortest time and would have an interest that his treatment be done in that time."

Rev. Bieringer was under the impression "that the charge of murder probably made by the relatives of Schedlbauer and Helling had been taken up by the acting court-martial, Jacks was probably sentenced to some punishment, the remainder of which he must have served in America. Why would Jacks have come with the American sergeant-major without arms and belt?"

The latter is said to have further stated as a reason for the shootings that "the four had seen Schedlbauer shot and could have testified against him. Furthermore, they would have belonged to the Volkssturm, and finally he also wanted to experience an adventure for once."

The "Nabburger Volksbote" reported on April 29, 1961:

"On Saturday, April 28, 1945, Mayor Haller was in the City Council building between 10:30 and 11 a.m.. He had just left to run an errand for a French prisoner of war when three American soldiers appeared and asked for him. They again departed without having accomplished anything. No one knows where they came from, no one knows who sent them. But everyone knows one thing: they did not come by themselves!

Mayor Haller soon returned to the city administration building and then went with former Russian prisoners to an adjoining room, which served as a storage room for all kinds of utensils. In the meantime, the Americans also arrived for the second time. They left with Mayor Haller, who quickly complied with the request to take his hat with him.

As people testified; who at that time had exit to do field work, they saw an American military vehicle, which was occupied with three soldiers and mayor Haller. This vehicle drove about a quarter of an hour later again into the city. They suspected bad things. A Nabbur- -308-

ger, who was a prisoner of war on his way back to his hometown, also witnessed this gruesome death drive near the Josefikapelk. He recognized Mayor Haller, who called out to him, and noticed that the military vehicle stopped shortly behind his location. Behind a barn standing there, a man suddenly stepped out and approached the vehicle. A little afraid himself - he had just come out of captivity - he immediately made his escape.

A farmer from Passelsdorf, who had gone to Nabburg in the early morning and was on his way home after running some errands, then found the murdered mayor. He walked on his helmet way the so-called Passelsdorfer Kirchsteig. When he arrived at the forest path between the border of the Neuweiher municipal forest department, he saw something lying on the right-hand side of the path from a distance, which he initially thought was a coat. When he slowly came closer, however, he realized to his horror that there lay a dead man. He was lying with the right side of his body and the right side of his face on the Rain, his feet down on the path. Although he could only see the left side of his face, he recognized Mayor Haller.

The farmer insistently assured that he had not touched the dead man. So Haller lay at this time with his back upwards on the blood-soaked earth. A shocking picture - the victim of brutal murderers who trample the laws of God with their feet!

Although the murder had become known in Nabburg on Saturday, it was not until Sunday that the local gravedigger was commissioned to transport the body away. The population, still under the pressure of the events,

did not dare to speak a word about the incident. There were only rumors, and even to this day there are still rumors about this outrageous act of murder. When the dead man's vehicle arrived at the place designated to him, Mayor Haller was no longer lying with his back up, but on his back. At a distance of 2 to 3 meters, a pool of blood had colored the road red. A few days later, two cartridge cases were still found, which an American officer took. Mayor Haller had been brutally murdered by two shots through the chest and a stab wound through the right eye. Who turned the dead man? Was he perhaps still alive, although he had been shot down cowardly in the back? Where from and why else the stab in the eye! Did the Americans, armed to the teeth, use a stabbing weapon? It is unlikely that the weapons of three American soldiers contained only two cartridges. Were they Americans at all who did the deed, or were they civilians?

Only after the dead man was brought to the morgue did the relatives learn of this terrible incident. They had, although mayor -309-

Haller had already been gone for a day, there was still hope that he would return. But things turned out differently. The gravedigger had been entrusted with the transmission of this distressing news. It would have been guilt and duty to find another way here. On Wednesday, May 2, 1945, in the afternoon, the funeral took place. There were only a few people from Nabburg who heard about it and therefore paid their last respects to the dead mayor. Later, in gratitude, the town of Nabburg had a memorial cross erected, the inauguration of which was attended by many citizens from Nabburg and the surrounding area. In the distant future, it will still bear witness to the fact that here, the spawns of human society committed an injustice that can never be repaired. The decision to erect this memorial stone was also recorded in the minutes of the town council. The initial wording, which incomprehensibly reported a "deceased" Mayor Haller, had to be changed to reflect the facts." The number of those who "died" in those days will probably never be ascertainable!

In Nabburg, a twenty-year-old employee won a large lottery prize at a farmers' ball as part of a ten-strong betting syndicate. The "Landshuter Zeitung" of February 9, 1960, reported this pleasing event under the headline "That was the most beautiful ball of my life. The final sentence of this small local reportage, however, glaringly and mercilessly illuminated the conditions that prevailed in Bavaria in 1945 and everywhere where the victors roamed the countryside. It read: "Twenty-year-old Luise Haller is the only daughter of a widow whose husband died after the war and who had to get by on a pension of 60 marks. Her grandfather had been mayor in Nabburg and had been shot by the Americans in the post-war confusion."

In a report on the Mitterndorf monastery estate, the "Oberbayerisches Volksblatt" wrote on September 9, 1960, among other things: "Mitterndorf had to endure occupation by the SS at the end of April [1945]. Before the arrival of the Americans they hid in the moor, later they find death by shooting in the forests of Seebruck."

On May 7, 1960, the "Passauer Neue Presse" published a commemorative report titled "The Last Act: The City of Passau Surrenders". Among other things, the paper wrote about the actions of the Americans: "For example, in and near Tittling on April 29, 1945 - the day the town was occupied - two SS men were shot when there was no longer any fighting. On this day, 41-year-old SS-Unterscharführer Erich Altena from Duisburg biked from Passau to Tittling to visit his wife, who was housed there. He did not know that American troops were already in the market. In Neukirchen he drove right in front of a US tank unit.

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Caterpillars. With the words, "You SS," they took the belt from him and gave him a few blows. When he was then frisked, the GIs found a magazine on him in which they discovered caricatures of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. According to eyewitnesses, they became so enraged by this that they forced Altena to eat the magazine. Later they took him away on a tank and then made him run across a meadow outside the village of Neukirchen. In the process, he was shot with a submachine gun.

At this, one of the Americans told another German prisoner, "We shoot all SS, officer or man."

The master builder Josef Stadler from Bernbach near Hutthurm was shot on May 1, 1945, because he was thought to be an SS man. He really was a member of the general SS and a convinced National Socialist. But the Americans made their determination on the basis of a mix-up. They found a fireman uniform and mistook it for an SS uniform. Stadler was also transported to his execution site on the cooler of a jeep. He was found in the Hutthurmer forest with three bullets in his chest. His wife still believes today that Stadler was the victim of an informer."

However, American war crimes appear before us not only in newspaper reports, in sworn testimonies, but also in proper documents.

The HIAG Regensburg endeavored to determine the fate of fallen soldiers as part of its reconnaissance of missing persons. In a letter dated July 12, 1956, the then Tracing Service Officer, Hans Joachim List, addressed the headquarters of the U.S. Army in Heidelberg. He wrote:

**"In front of the graves of the fallen
the hatred that arises from war is silenced,
and only the noble sense of their sacrifice
gain shape over life!"**

Dear Sirs!

The HIAG has made it one of its most important tasks to support relatives who are looking for missing fathers, men or sons of the last war in this endeavor, and secondly to try to establish the identity of graves of unknown soldiers, to find the relatives and to inform them. This is done in cooperation with the German Red Cross, the German War Graves Commission and all relevant offices and authorities.

In the course of our efforts, we were provided with a list by the German War Graves Commission via the local burial office, at which

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where we encounter destinies that cannot be solved by our own initiative alone.

Thus, at the end of April 1945, an unknown man was shot by members of the U.S. Army near Großenried, Neuburg County (field grave 250 meters north of Heiltenbacher Mühle).

Three unknown SS members were allegedly beaten to death by American troops in Rainsdorf in April 1945 because of their affiliation with the Waffen-SS (grave site Walting, district Cham/Opf.), identification tags were missing during reburial.

Two unknown persons were shot by US units in Katzberg in April 1945 (district Cham/Opf.).

On April 26, 1945 Horst Morsch died in Lichteneck (burial site Thenried, district Kötzing; field grave on the Vogel property), papers and dog tags were taken away by the American troops. Also on April 26, 1945, Uffz. Georg Hachmann died in Lichteneck (burial place: Thenried, district of Kötzing; field grave in the meadows near Lichteneck). According to statements by various local residents, the severely wounded Uffz. was beaten to death (skull crushed) by American troops. Papers and dog tags were taken away by the American soldiers.

On April 26, 1945, twenty unknown soldiers died in Lengfeld, district Kelheim. (According to our investigations so far, they were probably members of the SS division "Nibelungen"). Papers and identification tags are missing. From fourteen further, partly unknown dead the identification marks are available. These seem to indicate that they were mostly members of the Wehrmacht who had been incorporated into the Waffen-SS in March 1945.

On April 28, 1945, fifteen members of the Waffen SS were shot by American troops in Eberstetten, Pfaffenhofen County. Papers and identification tags were taken from those unknown to us by the American troops. The collective grave was located on the road from Eberstetten to Pfaffenhofen. We are firmly convinced that these liquidations of German soldiers were not carried out with the consent of the American troop leadership at the time, but can only be attributed to the high-handedness of individual unit commanders and to bad propaganda. It is also not our intention to condemn such actions here, which unfortunately occurred on all sides in a war of the magnitude of the last one, but only earned the Waffen SS the title of war criminals.

Rather, we ask U.S. Army Headquarters on behalf of the An-

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We would like to ask the people who today, eleven years after the end of the war, are still waiting for news about the fate of the missing to support us in our efforts.

It will certainly be possible for you to determine units and unit leaders of the U.S. units fighting in the areas mentioned at that time and to inquire about the whereabouts of the dog tags and papers as well as the circumstances that led to the demise of the unknown persons.

We presume that U.S. Army Headquarters will be sympathetic to our situation. We enclose for your perusal a confirmation from the German Red Cross stating that we are engaged in search duties. We ask that this confirmation be sent back to us after we have taken note of it.

Since we can imagine that the research you may carry out will take a longer period of time, we would like to ask you for a preliminary reply informing us whether we can generally count on your support.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation, also on behalf of the bereaved families who are waiting for clarity about the fate of their missing persons.

With the expression of excellent respect HIAG-Kreisgemeinschaft Regensburg gez. Hans Joachim List." Shortly thereafter, HIAG Regensburg sent an addendum to its letter of July 12, 1956: "On April 20, an unknown SS-Oberscharführer of the 2nd White-Ruth. SS-Division, 2nd/E. Pol. Schtz. Reg. 2-659 (burial place Hütten, Krs. Neustadt W.N.). The Oberscharführer was wounded in the leg, had blond hair, skullcap destroyed. Supposed to have been killed by shot in the neck by American troops." The American response was almost classic:

"Headquarters, US Army, Europe AEACA 312.1 CA

AP0 403 August 3, 1956

Mr. Hans Joachim List

Red fallow way 29

Regensburg

Dear Mr. List,

Your letter dated 12 July 1956 has been received at this headquarters and will receive appropriate attention. -313-

In the event this headquarters can be of any assistance to your organization you will be so advised.

As requested in your letter, we are returning your German Red Cross certificate.

1 Incl: Certificate Tp:Heid Mil 8134

Sincerely Irving W. Munroe, Captain, AGC, Asst. AG.

Not a word about the smashed German skullcaps, not a line about the American neck shots! Significantly, however, no denial either. The essential sentence of the letter is: "If the headquarters of your organization can help in any way, you will be informed." However, this briefing never took place.

Hans Linberger was severely wounded by Pak direct hits in the bridgehead battles east of Kiev. His left upper arm was torn off, his body covered with splinters. It was his fourth wounding. After a long stay in a hospital he was discharged as Oberscharführer of the Waffen-SS on March 9, 1945 to the replacement company in Dachau.

On 79. On April 79, 1945, the replacements, all of whom were severely disabled and not fit for front-line duty, laid down their weapons, reported to the head physician of the site hospital, Dr. Dr. Schröder, and were assigned to a barracks. Evacuated women and children were accommodated in another barrack. The medical staff was preparing for the surrender. Doctors were identified by white coats, pharmacists and medical personnel by the international Red Cross armband. From the Schleißheim area, the wounded and convalescents of the military hospital heard the noise of battle. German flak was still fighting there for some time. Then, at about 4:30 p.m., it became quiet.

Nevertheless, sporadic shots were suddenly fired, although no German resistance was offered. Sergeant Linberger now took a Red Cross hand flag and went to the entrance of the military hospital. He was marked there by his empty left sleeve for miles around as a severely wounded man. He immediately explained to the Americans, who were moving in like a shock troop, that this was a military hospital which would, of course, be handed over without weapons. One American put a machine gun on his chest and hit him in the face. Another shouted, "You fight Ruski, no good." Nevertheless, they let go of Linberger and now stormed the military hospital. The American who threatened Linberger first shot an unknown casualty in the corridor of a hospital barrack, who remained motionless.

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All doctors were chased out of the treatment rooms, as were the pharmacists and the medical staff. Dr. Dr. Schröder, who as head physician wanted to hand over the hospital to the Americans in due form, was beaten up

by them in such a way that he suffered a fracture of the base of the skull.

The Americans rounded up all the able-bodied people with the women and children in the military hospital compound and then drove them out onto the street in front of the heating plant. There they sorted out everything that looked like Waffen-SS, first looting the prisoners at gunpoint and taking watches, rings, mechanical pencils, fountain pens and money from them. Then the prisoners were chased into the horseshoe-walled courtyard of the heating plant.

There now stood arm and leg amputees, doctors, pharmacists, medical personnel, members of the WTL and the engineering school, the administration school, and even foreign members of the SS punishment company who were in Dachau for decomposition of military strength and similar offenses. On the half-right of Hans Linberger stood the skewer of the E.-Komp. WTL, Oberscharführer Jäger.

The Americans set up a machine gun in front of the crowd. Then American war correspondents came, photographed and filmed the group. In the middle of it, the machine gunner opened fire. With a burst of fire from left to right and back to the center, he knocked down the mass of about forty men standing against the wall. The women and children watched with wide-open eyes.

Sergeant Hans Linberger gave the following account of this mass murder on behalf of the German Red Cross:

"The comrade standing immediately behind me fell over me with the last cry - ouch, the pigs are shooting at my stomach - because for some inexplicable reason I had simply let myself fall. I didn't care whether it hit me standing up or lying down. So I only got the blood of the dead man, who was bleeding profusely from the chest, over my head and face, that I looked badly battered. During the break in the firing, which had occurred and was explained to me only by the drunken prisoners who had armed themselves with shovels in order to kill a man named Weiß, it was possible for me and the other comrades to survey the situation. Several crawled towards the Americans and wanted to identify themselves as foreigners - still others tried to explain that they had never had anything to do with the concentration camp. This White, however, said: "Calm down, we are dying for Germany."^A

Oberscharführer Jäger asked me lying down whether I had been hit, and I had to answer in the negative. He had been shot through the right forearm. I quickly shared a last rib of chocolate with him, since we were waiting for the shot in the neck. A man with a Red Cross armband tossed us razor blades and said, "There, get ready!" Jäger cut his shot arm in the pulse area, I cut the left one, and as he told me as a

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When an amputee was about to apply the blade, an officer of the Americans arrived with the beaten-up Dr. Dr. Schröder, who could hardly stand on his feet, and stopped the shooting. Thus we were able to drag our freshly wounded comrades out with us. I still remember one comrade who had been shot in the stomach and was taken with us to Dachau, where they crammed us into the hall of the Hörhammer inn with all shades of troops. On the way we were spat on by looters from the troop camps and recommended for hanging. During this action about twelve dead men were left nameless. As I learned later, the papers and identification tags were removed on American orders, and commandos of German prisoners of war are said to have buried the dead in places unknown to me.

During the shooting, the wife of a Dr. Müller, with whom I corresponded years ago, poisoned herself and her two children out of despair. I was able to locate the grave of these people, in which eight SS members are said to lie, among them Oberscharführer Maier. Maier was a transfemoral amputee and was shot up at another place on the perimeter wall of the military hospital. He lay for a day with a shot in the stomach and asked Frau Steinmann that she should strike him dead, since he could no longer bear it. The onset of death, however, relieved Mrs. Steinmann of her comrade's last wish.

Near the military hospital corpse presumably the other comrades were shot at the wall, since later by me the impacts at the wall were determined. The grave became known to me as a later PW in the same Lazarettsgelände through the wife of a former concentration camp inmate, who approached the camp fence on All Souls' Day 1946 and tearfully commemorated her children buried in the same grave. The children must have died in the Lazarethhospital after the collapse and the takeover of the Lazaretto by the Americans. Other Waffen SS members buried in the leveled grave are to be determined from the Tracing Service file."

Anton Bergermayer declared on oath on May 19, 1964:

"In the summer of 1945, the IV SS Panzer Corps, of which I was a member (formerly Stabsbatterie IV./SS-Pz.AR 5 "Wiking"), was located in the Riegsee/Upper Bavaria area. With a few exceptions, the units were in the

open on the eastern shore of Riegsee. Since the rations supplied by the Americans were almost nil, not a blade of grass could be found on the camp meadows and no bark or leaves on the trees ...

One morning, in June or July 1945, fir branches were spread out in the middle of the camp area and two dead SS men were laid on them. We have learned that the two men, who were still very young, had been buried during -316-

They were arrested by an American patrol and brought before a lieutenant, who told them that they had begged for bread from farmers in a village in the vicinity - the camp boundaries were not marked by barbed wire at that time. They were arrested by an American patrol and brought before a lieutenant. The American lieutenant took the two men out into the street and murdered them by shooting them in the neck, Bolshevik style. In the morning the bodies had to be picked up by SS men and laid out in the camp, where they had to lie in the sweltering heat as a deterrent. I cannot remember how long the bodies were laid out, but I think it was about two days. As far as I know, the bodies were buried in the local cemetery of Aidling am Riegsee/Obb. and the graves must still be found there, unless they were reburied."

There is even an American star witness for this wretched treatment of German prisoners by American troops: the writer Marguerite Higgins, who describes her experiences and observations in 1945 in her book "News in a singular thing". Just a small excerpt from it:

"An excited young GI ran up to Knauth [another American correspondent]. He pulled him by the sleeve and hissed at him, "Hey, if you're with the press and really want to see something, follow me. They're getting beaten up there right now."

"Who's hitting who?" I interjected. But Knauth and the GI were already striding away. I followed them. The GI led us to the main gate of the concentration camp [Buchenwald], at either side of which stood a narrow rectangular building containing cell blocks. The American soldier entered the building on our right, and we came immediately behind him. We found ourselves facing a long hall crowded with excitedly talking Americans lined up side by side in two rows. The hall was parallel and abutted the cell blocks. "Make way for the press!" yelled our soldier in a tone that showed the pleasure of the attention he was attracting. While the soldier ran in between, Knauth and I made our way clear to the beginning of the line. As we approached, we could hear blows and cries of agony.

"Hey, Charley, that's enough! Now it's my turn!" yelled one of the GIs. Knauth and I finally reached the beginning of the line. "Charly" was just coming out of one of the cell blocks, grinning triumphantly. Behind the bars of the cell, directly across from us, were three uniformed Germans. Two of them, battered and covered with blood, lay unconscious on the floor. A third German was being held up by his shock of hair (I won't forget him, he had red hair like carrots). A GI alternately thrashed his body and punched him in the face. As the victim moaned and sighed, the GI kept yelling: the shut up, damned Kraut!"

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When an amputee was about to apply the blade, an officer of the Americans arrived with the beaten-up Dr. Dr. Schröder, who could hardly stand on his feet, and stopped the shooting. Thus we were able to drag our freshly wounded comrades out with us. I still remember one comrade who had been shot in the stomach and was taken with us to Dachau, where they crammed us into the hall of the Hörhammer inn with all shades of troops. On the way we were spat on by looters from the troop camps and recommended for hanging. During this action about twelve dead men were left nameless. As I learned later, the papers and identification tags were removed on American orders, and commandos of German prisoners of war are said to have buried the dead in places unknown to me

During the shooting, the wife of a Dr. Müller, with whom I corresponded years ago, poisoned herself and her two children out of despair. I was able to locate the grave of these people, in which eight SS members are said to lie, among them Oberscharführer Maier. Maier was a transfemoral amputee and was shot up at another place on the perimeter wall of the military hospital. He lay for a day with a shot in the stomach and asked Frau Steinmann that she should strike him dead, since he could no longer bear it. The onset of death, however, released Mrs. Steinmann from her comrade's last wish.

Near the military hospital corpse presumably the other comrades were shot at the wall, since later by me the impacts at the wall were determined. The grave became known to me as a later PW in the same Lazarettsgelände through the wife of a former concentration camp inmate, who approached the camp fence on All Souls' Day 1946

and tearfully commemorated her children buried in the same grave. The children must have died in the Lazarethhospital after the collapse and the takeover of the Lazaretto by the Americans. Other Waffen SS members buried in the leveled grave are to be determined from the Tracing Service file."

Anton Bergermayer declared on oath on May 19, 1964:

"In the summer of 1945, the IV SS Panzer Corps, of which I was a member (formerly Stabsbatterie IV./SS-Pz.AR 5 "Wiking"), was located in the Riegsee/Upper Bavaria area. With a few exceptions, the units were in the open on the eastern shore of Riegsee. Since the rations supplied by the Americans were almost nil, not a blade of grass could be found on the camp meadows and no bark or leaves on the trees ...

One morning, in June or July 1945, fir branches were spread out in the middle of the camp area and two dead SS men were laid on them. We have learned that the two men, who were still very young, had been buried during -316-

They were arrested by an American patrol and brought before a lieutenant, who told them that they had begged for bread from farmers in a village in the vicinity - the camp boundaries were not marked by barbed wire at that time. They were arrested by an American patrol and brought before a lieutenant. The American lieutenant took the two men out into the street and murdered them by shooting them in the neck, Bolshevik style. In the morning the bodies had to be picked up by SS men and laid out in the camp, where they had to lie in the sweltering heat as a deterrent. I cannot remember how long the bodies were laid out, but I think it was about two days. As far as I know, the bodies were buried in the local cemetery of Aidling am Riegsee/Obb. and the graves must still be found there, unless they were reburied."

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"What's wrong?" I yelled over the yelps and groans to the nearest of the soldiers, who happened to be Charley.

"They're SS boys," Charley yelled back, proudly adding, "We caught them in the woods. We give them some of their own medicine. We'll get them ready for the pile of bodies there!"

It turned out that for almost a quarter of an hour the double line of twenty to thirty American soldiers stood aligned to methodically take turns beating up the six captured Germans. I turned to Knauth: "You know what will happen if we say anything," I remarked unhappily. At the Wasserburg bridge, the GIs had turned hostile to some correspondents who asked them about the killing of German prisoners of war; one of them had said cuttingly, "Little boys and girls who don't like ugly things had better stay home by the fireside!"

"I know," said Knauth, "there must be some officer sledding nearby." To my relief, he was quick and successful. Within minutes, a sub-lieutenant appeared, shouted at the people, and ordered them to desist from their victims.

It came out that the excited GIs had captured six young Germans who were not members of the SS at all. The

young people had been drafted into a Reich Labor Service battalion only a few days before. This was part of a desperate last minute attempt to stave off defeat. Before the Third Army had conquered this area, the boys were still busy. Throwing out protective trenches that were never occupied again. The youngest among them with carrot red hair was fourteen years old. The other five German boys in the cell blocks were between fourteen and seventeen years old. But their youth and blamelessness did not matter. The point here is that the GIs in the cell blocks engaged in the same brutality that we condemned in the enemy."

About the murder of German prisoners of war by Americans near Wasserburg in Bavaria, Miss Higgins said: "It began the first time I saw an American soldier shoot down an unarmed and helpless German prisoner of war. This shooting or - using the correct word: murdering - at the bridge of Wasserburg destroyed some very pleasant and black-and-white views I had developed about the distribution of good and evil among people on our side and people on the other side."

The English alone left almost no trace. Even in Vahrendorf in the district of Marburg, where on April 26, 1945, about 20 mostly wounded -318

young German soldiers fell into the hands of British troops, were subsequently shot and thrown into a bomb hopper on the farm property of the former mayor Witt and buried indiscriminately, there was no trial-proof evidence against the murderers and their troops.

It is certain that in June 1945 two English soldiers came to the farmer Witt and informed him in conversation that German soldiers who had been shot were buried on his land. The verifications confirmed this information, and now the farm owner Witt, in connection with German authorities, made efforts for a proper burial of these last war victims.

Finally, in the spring of 1946, the Alves Funeral Home, Harburg, undertook a reburial of the bodies on behalf of the authorities, which were then buried alongside their fallen comrades in the small Heroes' Cemetery on the Vahrendorf-Alvessen road.

The funeral home did not provide any information. The authorities know nothing. Only the dead remain dead.

Wolfgang Buchwald, one of the young company commanders in these battles, described years ago in the "WikingRuf" "Das Schicksal der Kampfgruppe "Panzer-teufel"" (The fate of the battle group "Panzer Devils") and also came to talk about the tragic events of Vahrendorf

Wolfgang Buchwald wrote:

"Defenseless wounded shot.

At the company command post, Untersturmführer Früh no longer has an overview of the situation. For an hour there has been no more news from the platoons. Seven farmhouses are already in flames. The cattle are roaring like mad. But there are no inhabitants left in the village. As we are on the lookout in the vicinity of the command post, some Tommies rush along the road. They immediately take cover and take us under fire. Uscha. Finkler receives a burst of MPi fire in the chest and is killed instantly. We also receive fire from the right. According to this, the whole village is surrounded and we are mousetrapped. The 3rd platoon has already broken off, and we follow them as quickly as possible. In the meantime it has become daylight, and up to the protecting forest at the initial position we have to pass over 1 km through coverless terrain. The English infantry can therefore not follow us. Impact lies next to impact, and everyone can say of luck if he reaches the forest alive or unwounded.

At the tank ditch, most of the comrades collapse from exhaustion. The navy provides first aid, and our medics have their hands full. In the meantime, Borowski's group had moved away from the edge of the village when they were suddenly taken under fire from a skylight by an English SMG. One behind the other, all 19 men, head towards the forest, lie in cover in a small ditch next to the road. One cannot be- -319-

because of without drawing fire to himself. Therefore, no one knows what is going on behind him. The machine gun fire is non-stop. Every now and then someone cries out in pain. One of them prays the "Our Father" continuously until he suddenly falls silent. Another jumps up, but immediately falls hit against the barbed wire fence. The body is riddled with bullets. Uscha. Lindner is shot in the stomach and is dying.

Borowski is in the lead. As he tries to find better cover, his left leg is literally shot off by a machine gun barb. With his last strength he reaches a protective hollow. At times he loses consciousness. But he can still see 16 SPW approaching from Sottorf and the crew sitting down at the crossroads. A hulking sergeant, called "John Bull," marches in the lead. In his hand he holds a large Colt. But none of the 19 men stand up. They are

apparently already dead or badly wounded. Now and then Borowski hears a shot. The wounded comrades are relieved of their pain. Suddenly Gren. Schadow, who is lying behind Borowski, jumps up and screams for help. He receives a shot in the testicle and collapses. Uscha. Lindner is relieved of his pain. Borowski is swimming in a pool of blood. He notices his watch being taken from him, then he loses consciousness. He wakes up on an English stretcher and finds his comrade Schadow in the dressing area. The two are the only survivors. The 17 dead comrades, however, lay in the trench for days. After the war, we find them again in a filled-in bomb craters. We can identify only a few."

The situation was different in those areas of northern Germany that were handed over by the British to the Poles, who were allied with them. The English proceeded very rigorously. In the writing "Volksfest" of the office Windheim to Lahde, 24. and 25. September 1941, one can read about it:

"On April 9, 1945, an English colonel appeared at the mayor's office in Lahde with a German-speaking major and had it explained, "There are two camps back there, they are suitable for receiving foreigners, and this town will probably have to be cleared.""

In a short time the barracks, which were intended for 600 to 900 men, were overcrowded, and already on April 10 the first evacuation order came for Lahde. This was followed by orders for Bierde on April 19, Ilserheide on May 1 (both original English orders for the evacuations are still in existence), Raderhorst on May 12, and Preußisch- and Bückeburgisch-Frille on May 15. Excluded from the evacuation as far as possible by English order were: Bakeries, butcher shops, engineers and technicians, police, municipal officials, blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, grocers, doctors, veterinarians and midwif- -320-

men. While the inhabitants of Lahde, Bierde and Ilserheide had been able to take all their furnishings, food, fodder and livestock with them when they were liberated, in Raderhorst and Frille the entire furnishings, especially the beds, had to be left behind. Rations were allowed only for 24 hours, so that practically all food supplies, slaughtered goods, etc. had to be left to the foreigners. The bringing of livestock was exempted. Each person was allowed 100 kg of luggage. Bierde, Ilserheide, Raderhorst and Frille were then occupied by Poles and Russians. On May 20, Whitsunday, Wietersheim was evacuated between 9:30 and 13:00. Päpinghausen and Cammer in Bückeburg followed on May 30 with an evacuation period of three hours, which was then extended by two hours by the English officer!"

This mass forced evacuation after the war was carried out by the British command at Lahde, which consisted of Major Rogers, Major Hicksen, and Captain Picken.

The Poles soon exercised an unparalleled reign of terror against the German farmers in the area. Hundreds of head of cattle were stolen or robbed from Wietersheim, Frille and all other communities, as well as food of all kinds, and of course bicycles and vehicles of all kinds. Altogether, in 1949, the Windheim office put the damage caused by the Poles under British protection in the seven communities at an amount of 15 million DM.

The German police had no authority in the "Polish villages", the German population was powerless and without rights against harassment and criminals. There were numerous rapes, 287 gang raids on farms with looting, mostly the Poles carried firearms. They severely maltreated every German who was not at their beck and call. 149 burglaries and 529 thefts were recorded, and apart from livestock and crops, 462 bicycles, 5200 pieces of clothing, 181 watches, 38 motor vehicles and cash in the amount of 57,565 Reichsmark were stolen. Of the 14 murders committed by the Poles, only one was solved, and in the case of thefts and robberies, only a fraction of the perpetrators were apprehended.

The victims who were murdered in the Polish villages under the eyes of the English, who had left the Germans defenseless at the mercy of the Poles and Russians, were:

the wife Frieda Bleeke (34), shot by Russians on 9. 4. 1945 -the wife Henny Gebhardt (31), shot by Russians on 9. 4. 1945 -the worker Heinrich Krumme (42), shot by Poles on 22. 4. 1945; he left behind his wife and 4 children -the wife Sophie Schäkel (48), shot by Poles on 1. 5. 1945 -the wife Sophie Limbach (55), shot on -321

Friedrich Rodenbeck (58), master carpenter, mortally wounded by Poland on 2. 8. 1945; he left behind his wife and 2 sons - Wilhelm Diekmann (55), laborer, mortally wounded by Poland on 16. 8. 1945; he left behind his wife and 3 children - Hermann Lange (78), farmer for the elderly, murdered by Poland on 22. 8. 1945 - Wilhelm Peek (52), seaman, murdered by Poland on 27. 8. 1945; he left behind his wife and a daughter - Wilhelmine Lange (52), wife, murdered by Poland on 28. 8. 1945; she left behind a son - Wilhelmine Lange (52), farmer, murdered by Poland on 27. 8. 1945; he left behind his wife and 2 sons - Wilhelm Diekmann (55), laborer,

mortally wounded by Poland on 16. 8. 1945; he left behind his wife and 3 children 1945 by Poland; he left behind his wife and a daughter - the wife Wilhelmine Lange (52), murdered by Poland on 28. 8.1945; she left behind a son - the farmer Christian Witte (41), murdered by Poland on 28. 8. 1945 by Poland; he left the wife and a daughter - the carpenter Wilhelm Bicknese (50), on 3. 10.1945 by Poland shot; he left the wife and 2 children - the farmer Friedrich Völker (24), on 28. 3. 1946 by Poland murdered - the cattle buyer Reinking (23), on 5. 3.1948 by Poland shot.

Heinz Scholz reports on the "working together" between the English and Soviet Russians as follows:

"My hometown is Wismar on the Baltic Sea. On May 8, 1945, the Russians advanced from Rostock to the city limits, and the Western Allies occupied the city from Schwerin and Lübeck. The demarcation line between the Russians and the British ran along the eastern and southeastern city limits;

the city itself was in the command area of the British. Around noon, it may have been between 12 and 1 p.m., of this terrible day, my father, Heinrich Scholz, became an eyewitness to the following horrible event: From the Dornier airfield, which with its many large hangars lay widely extended along the Wismar Bay, a last group of 4 or 5 German air force soldiers arrived. When this group arrived on the Dornier Bridge, an English unit, also motorized, said to have been soldiers of the so-called "Red Devils" (Canadians?), came to meet it. The English unit stopped on the street at the height of the garages at the sea border slaughterhouse (at that time there was only one residential building belonging to the sea border slaughterhouse for the administration and canteen personnel of the slaughterhouse at this harbor street), My father, who came from our garden situated at the Haff field, was at this moment at the height of the British unit, but on the other side of the street. From there to the Dornier Bridge it is 40 to 50 meters.

When the German soldiers noticed the British, they stopped, got out and walked, unarmed and not strapped down, towards the Englishmen lying on top of their vehicle. They did not have their arms raised but hanging down unceremoniously. They laughed.

After a few steps they received fire from machine guns. The German soldiers collapsed and remained lying. Three British went -322-

then approached the dead and threw them down the embankment next to the road.

When my father wrung his hands in the face of this murder and cried out, the Englishmen who had remained at the vehicle laughed loudly, and one called out to him:

"Go home, grandpa, this is our war!""

The Germans were simply outlawed. For everyone! Even for the Danes!

Hugo Patzner reports on an event in Denmark, seven months after the armistice:

"In all probability it was on 19.12. 1945 that my last company commander, First Lieutenant Martin, at that time transport leader of German air force soldiers under R. A. F. control (frozen personnel) was on the march from Vaerlose airfield (Zealand/Denmark) by Danish state railroad to the reception camp at Nordtorf near Neumünster (Schleswig-Holstein). We could have been about 150 or even more German soldiers and had free escort by English order, so were on our way without English escort in full discipline.

At the border station Tinglev we were suddenly rudely awakened. In the meantime it was already midnight when we were chased out of the wagons by Danish military with machine guns. On the small square in front of the station we found ourselves lined up and then had to go through felt commandos one by one. These were, as we found out later, specifically geared to ranks. To report about it in detail would lead too far, and it is not worth mentioning at all because of this tragedy. That night, in a service room of the station, in the presence of two Danish officers and soldiers, Lieutenant Martin was shot in the stomach by a Danish policeman from a distance of three meters with his service pistol for no reason. We were all in front of the station waiting for things to happen when there was a request for a medic and bandages in our ranks. In the general murmur I did not perceive anything of the direct incident. After some time a Danish Sanka drove onto the small station square, which stopped a few meters away next to the illuminated Christmas tree and the crew went into the station building with a stretcher. Immediately afterwards a sergeant major from our transport (whom I did not know) came and shouted loudly to us that Lieutenant Martin had been shot down by a Danish policeman from a distance of three meters, well he had demanded that the Danish lieutenant major speak to the English commandant. We were English prisoners and not Danish; that was apparently reason enough to shoot down a German officer

The Sanka and its crew were not from the Danish Wehrmacht, for they wore dark blue uniforms. When they carried Lieutenant Martin into the Sanka, two Danish officers and the Danish policeman stepped gemach- -323-

They followed us at a brisk pace, seemingly satisfied, until they reached their soldiers, who surrounded us. At the sight of these three heroes we all shouted loudly "fie", until the Danish soldiers made clear to us with the shout "holts Keff" and the loading of their machine pistols what action they were capable of. We were then quiet because we wanted to see our homeland again.

When we arrived in Nordtorf, the deputy transport leader reported this incident to the English service.

However, we never heard from First Lieutenant Martin again. First Lieutenant Martin was about 30 years old, an upright and comradely officer; he came from Berlin. I can have my statements corroborated by at least three witnesses." -324-

The conspiracy of silence will it finally be broken?

Unfortunately, I am not in a position to report on the certainly stirring experiences of German prisoners of war in Soviet captivity. Until now, the official authorities have not released the reports of the prisoners of war, which were carefully collected and sifted for years.

3,800,000 German soldiers became Soviet prisoners of war. It is certain that more than 1 200 000 German soldiers perished in Soviet captivity. How the Soviets still treated their prisoners in 1945 can be seen in a letter from Elfriede Lange to August Graf de la Rosee dated June 24, 1946.

On March 16, 1945, from the window of the estate, which the Germans were not allowed to leave by order of the Russians, Elfriede Lange and her parents observed at about 11 a.m. a miserable procession of German prisoners, about 45 to 50 strong, trudging along the street, escorted by Russian guards.

The young soldiers, who looked almost like old men, were completely ragged and barefoot.

Elfriede Lange describes what happened next as follows:

"On 16. 3.45 in the morning about 50 German prisoners of war pass through my home village. Shortly after the village, your son later told me, the Russian guard ordered a stop. He says that the eight lightly wounded, including your son, should stay behind, since they will be taken by wagon in a moment. Suddenly the guard takes the machine gun and shoots the eight men. Seven of them are killed immediately, while your son, severely wounded, remains lying among the corpses until the Russians have moved away. Then he comes running to my father's homestead. We put him in a room in a bed. Then the Russians came again and held a woman hunt. Father was taken away, but he came back, and mother and I had to run away. When we sneaked back into the house two hours later, a guard was standing by the bed. We were not allowed to bandage him.

Her son had a shot in the stomach. In the fighting south of Köslin he had been lightly wounded in the leg on 12. 3. 45. This wound -325-

was certainly not bad. In the evening two Russian doctors came and bandaged him. They told us that your son would only live for a few hours, which could be clearly seen. With the doctors, the guard finally left. Your son said, "I think I will get well soon, and then I will see my mommy again." He asked for a cigarette, which I gave him. Then he told me about his life, about his homeland. Then his consciousness left him. He called for his mother and father. He also spoke of a Gudrun. At about 11:30 p.m. he fell asleep. The next morning the Russians ordered that your son be buried behind my father's farm buildings. Taking him to the cemetery was not allowed. Whatever was in his pockets was taken away by the Russians.

When the Poles came later, I showed them the grave so that they should not build on this spot. When we are allowed back home, we will take care of the grave as a German soldier should.

Maybe if you want to know the area where your son rests! The village is called Alt-Quetzin. It is located 12 kilometers east of Kolberg and 6 kilometers from the Baltic Sea.

Your son was killed in the days when we experienced the most terrible things, because we were right behind the Russian front when Kolberg was shelled."

*

This documentation was started with Poland and shall also end with Poland.

In Lamsdorf near Oppeln 7500 Germans had to die under horrible tortures. Only 200 of the Lamsdorf Germans survived.

On April 23, 1964, the courageous newspaper "Unser Oberschlesien" published a report by the gravedigger of Lamsdorf, which was supplemented by the former camp physician Dr. Heinz Esser.

The gravedigger of Lamsdorf reports:

"To get into the Polish concentration camp Lamsdorf, it was enough to be German. During the interrogation, they were beaten with lead cables, practice hand grenades, leather-covered railroad chains, and other things until every single person admitted that they had belonged to a Nazi organization. There were about 7800 people in the camp. The camp strength was on average 2500 people, from the child in the cradle to the old man on the edge of the grave. The camp inmates were separated by sex. Boys up to 10 years old, girls up to 14 years old were with their mothers in the barracks. The boys from 10 to 14 years were grouped together in one room. From 14 years - 326-

the boys were distributed among men's barracks and had to do men's work. The barracks were Wehrmacht barracks. During the war, this type of barracks was occupied by 7 double beds. In the camp these were occupied by 18 double beds, in some cases the bed was occupied by two persons. Physical cleanliness was impossible. I arrived at the camp on 14. 9. 1945 with 63 men and 15 women. Hein Max was beaten bloody when he was admitted to the camp, pushed behind a barrack by two guards and shot there. The guards were reprimanded for this; a bullet is too good for Nazi pigs, they should be beaten to death like rats. Langer, Johann, wore a full black beard. That's why he was clamped in the vice with his beard and beaten to death with iron bars. They jumped around him like the savages with the roar:

"You Jud! You Judas!"

Böhm, Willi, wore exceptionally strong glasses, and because of this he was beaten up and stabbed several times in the chest with a sidearm. A country policeman from the Falkenberg district was beaten up. Two comrades had to grab him by the legs and drag him about 300 meters at a trot over the ground, then his clothes were set on fire. Up to that time I have never seen a death camp, neither of animal nor human, so rumpled as by this tortured creature. I could give many more such examples.

Early at 6 o'clock was reveille. During the night we had to take a piss in the bucket. The rooms were closed from the outside. After reveille, we were led to the latrine one room at a time. When we came back, we washed ourselves, there was a washing bowl for the whole room. Wetting the hands and going through the face once, that was all the toilet we could do. For shaving there was one razor for one parlor, one used blade from the posts in a week. There was no trace of sanitary facilities in the whole camp until April 1946. We had no vermin, but they had us.

I buried the dead, where the lice had exposed the bones around the neck ruff, ankles and wrists. The lice then sat almost 1 cm thick on top of each other. These pests sucked the blood completely. Anyone who lay in bed in the infirmary without temperature for longer without doing anything against the vermin was eaten alive by the lice, bugs and rats. Roll call was at 7 o'clock. We had to line up in double file, room by room. We had to be counted in Polish. Those who could not do so were beaten and kicked, preferably in the genitals. After roll call, early morning sports were held, not to exercise the body, but to harass. We were made to crawl and do push-ups.

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dien. Those who couldn't quite keep up were kicked to death. During roll call we regularly had at least four dead men in the morning and four in the evening. The field work was regularly done by the camp inmates. All the equipment needed to cultivate the fields was pulled by men and women, eight people to a horse. Often it went at a trot, in addition there were beatings. If one of them collapsed due to exhaustion, he was shot.

When we reported back to the camp, we were told that so and so had been shot on the run. The post was praised for this. On 15. 9. 1945 a detachment of 18 men drove 3 kilometers in a heavy wagon to steal a transformer. 12 men came back, marked by death. I buried about 400 dead there. I only saw the facial features of the 12 men later when they were dying. There was also a sick bay, i.e. death chamber. The infirmary was occupied by 24 beds. There was a nurse who had to keep the room clean and fetch food and water. She had to chop the wood herself. There was no more time for the individual care of the individual. Whoever did not have a healthy organism there was no more. When typhus was rampant in the winter of 45/46, 20 deaths per day were not uncommon with a camp strength of 2000 people. Often a bed was occupied twice during the day. The straw sack was often rotten. This did not bother us. On the contrary, it promoted mortality quite considerably, since the camp was set up only for the extermination of the Germans.

For the camp physician, Dr. Esser, it was a martyrdom to walk through the sick bay, he saw the sick and debilitated people lying there and could not help them. It happened that international aid organizations donated

medicines for the camp. These were destroyed before the eyes of the doctor. If a maltreated person went to the doctor for bandaging and told him how he got his injuries, he was beaten to death or shot by the guards in front of the doctor. The Poles whom the doctor had to treat were mostly sexually ill. The rations consisted of two or three potatoes and at noon of water, without any ingredients, and in the evening of erica tea, in which the rats had had their puerperium. In the fall of 45 there was a slice of bread every 2nd to 3rd day. In winter there was no bread, from April 46 there was 250 g of bread every day. I lived only on camp rations from 9/14 to 11/8/45. Relatives were later allowed to bring food into the camp. But this was not nearly enough. It was always a gamble with life for the relatives. For example, Mrs. Nolte from Rogau was stripped down to her underclothes in the winter, beaten and raped.

On holidays there was basically nothing to eat at all. Death was our most faithful companion. No one could be trusted. Because

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For a piece of bread, many have become traitors. Those who survived the hell of Lamsdorf alive were broken in body and soul. To report about it means to experience it. The doctors and social judges, who decide negatively out of ignorance in matters of care for the survivors of the Lamsdorf camp, are in a sense continuing the work of extermination begun by the Poles.

signed Josef Thiel"

Postscript:

1. Thiel has described in a simple way only a small part of the real events from his own experience without prompting.
2. The description corresponds to the facts.
3. Max Hein was shot in front of me until I stood in front of him. Afterwards he was stabbed by bayonet wounds (7 wounds in the chest and abdomen).
4. Langer, Johann, with his beard clamped in a vice, I found 2 hours later behind a barrack. On the corpse I found numerous severe maltreatment injuries, burns of the face and fractures of the skull.
5. There were up to ten deaths a day during roll call. Either their carotid arteries had been smashed or torn, or their intestines had been kicked in. I often found open abdomens afterwards, from which the intestines protruded.
6. Most causes of death were either death by maltreatment, as a result of starvation, asphyxiation of those buried alive, or shootings.
7. Thiel was used by the Polish partisans as a gravedigger and experienced physically and mentally unimaginable things. He is one of those survivors whose experiences of maltreatment and the consequences of starvation are not acknowledged by medical officers and social courts.
8. Only a few escaped from the Lamsdorf camp with their lives. In this camp, a mass murder took place that stands alone in world history in terms of its brutality and was so atrocious that it cannot be imagined, because the tortures and killings in their gruesome reality exceed any human imagination.
9. 19 years later, true to my medical oath, I have dutifully and responsibly prepared expert reports on the living of this camp, which should give both the judge and the official medical expert an objective picture for the assessment, which unfortunately still seems unbelievable to many, since it is unique and very often exceeds the descriptions of German concentration camps in terms of sadistic cruelty.

The question to the world's conscience is still, when will the federal government release to the world the documentary proven and historically peer-reviewed events so that injustice can be weighed against injustice?

Dr. med. Esser, Braunschweig
former camp physician of
Lamsdorf".

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With this I have given the final word for the whole documentation to a man who himself had to taste the Allied revenge and all its cruelty to the hilt.

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